

Editor's Column

Welcome to the first 2011 number of the *BARS Bulletin and Review*. We have a new Reviews editor, Dr David O'Shaughnessy, Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the University of Warwick and, as usual, a very good crop of reviews. There is also a report by Ve-Yin Tee on a major conference on literature and the environment in the nineteenth century, and the second of Kathryn Barush's articles on the fine arts (images available on the BARS website).

Over the Easter break I attended a remarkable conference on English and Welsh Diaspora at the University of Loughborough. It produced a real sense of intellectual community, as I'm sure will be case with the BARS conference in Glasgow. At a time when institutions and academics seem increasingly pitted against each other in a competitive zero-sum game (as explored in the Early Career and Postgraduate column), such events, and our membership of scholarly associations, may remind us that our best academic endeavours are always collaborative ones.

I am keen to publish two reports on the Glasgow conference in the autumn *Bulletin*. Given its size, it seems logical to have two accounts describing different trajectories through the conference. Please email me at d.higgins@leeds.ac.uk if you are interested in contributing a report. As always, I'd be delighted to hear from any member with any other items for inclusion or comments on the *Bulletin*.

David Higgins
Editor

Notices

BARS WEBSITE

www.bars.ac.uk

Anyone wanting to place advertisements, or with other requests regarding the website should contact our website editor, Padmini Ray Murray, either by email (padmini.raymurray@stir.ac.uk) or by post at the Department of English Studies, University of Stirling, FK9 4AL.

BARS MAILBASE

As a BARS member, you are entitled to receive the electronic BARS mailbase. This advertises calls for papers, events, resources and publications relevant to Romantic studies via email to over 350 members. If you would like to join, or post a message on the mailbase, please contact Neil Ramsey, the co-ordinator, by email (neil.ramsey@anu.edu.au) with your full name and email address. Information about the mailbase, along with copies of archived messages, can be found on the mailbase website: www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/bars.html

BARS MEMBERSHIP

BARS currently has more than 420 members. Members can ask for notices to be placed on the mailbase, on the website, and in the *Bulletin*. The website has a page dedicated to new books published by members, and you should let the editor know if you would like your recent work to be listed. Similarly, if you are editing a collection of essays or a special issue of a journal, or working on a collaborative project, we can usually place notices calling for contributions on the website as well as in the *Bulletin*.

The annual subscription for BARS membership is £15 (waged) and £5 (unwaged/postgraduate). Members receive copies of the *BARS Bulletin and Review* twice a year and can join the electronic mailbase. Membership is necessary for attendance at BARS international conferences. For a membership form, please contact the BARS administrator, Louise Booth, at: romanticstudies@hotmail.com

It is now possible to check whether your subs are up-to-date on the bars.ac.uk website. PayPal has been set up from the website in the 'How to Join' section and is easy to use. The charge for using this method of payment has been included in the cost of membership, so, for those using PayPal, membership is £16 (waged) or £6 (unwaged/postgraduate).

BARS 2011 CONFERENCE

The BARS 2011 conference will take place at the University of Glasgow, 28-31 July 2011. Further details can be found at: www.gla.ac.uk/departments/englishliterature/bars2011/

BARS DAY CONFERENCES

BARS day conferences, in almost every case, are organised through the host institution. BARS assists by advertising conferences, advising on the format, and giving early warnings of any likely clashes with other planned events in our files. Part of the point of BARS is to act as a supportive system nationally, and its involvement in planning would partly be to help ensure that conferences are as evenly distributed across regions as possible in the course of any one year. BARS cannot underwrite day conferences, but it can make a financial contribution of up to £100 to help the organising department with costs.

Individuals or groups who would like to run a day conference are invited to contact Dr Angela Wright (a.h.wright@sheffield.ac.uk). There will

be no maximum number, but, in the event of possible overcrowding or clashes, BARS will assist by liaising between conferences distributed across the year, or across regions. BARS will actively solicit proposals. Proposals are also invited for interdisciplinary conferences.

STEPHEN COPLEY POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARDS

Postgraduates working in the area of Romantic Studies are invited to apply for a Stephen Copley Postgraduate Research Award. The BARS Executive Committee has established the awards in order to support postgraduate research. They are intended to help fund expenses incurred through travel to libraries, archives, etc. necessary to the student's research, up to a maximum of £300. Application for the awards is competitive, and cannot be made retrospectively. Applicants must be members of BARS (to join, see above). The names of recipients will be announced in the *BARS Bulletin and Review*, and successful applicants will be asked to submit a short report to the BARS Executive Committee and to acknowledge BARS in their thesis and/or any publication arising from the research trip.

Congratulations to recent recipients of the bursary: Kate Scarth, Warwick; Adam White, Manchester; Jeongsuk Kim, Sussex; Melanie Buntin, Glasgow; Melinda Graefe, Flinders University (Australia); Andrew McInnes, Exeter; Stacey McDowell, Bristol.

Please send the following information in support of your application:

1. Name, institutional affiliation, etc.
2. Details of your PhD project, including the stage your research is at.
3. Details of the research to be undertaken for which you need support, and its relation to your PhD.
4. *Detailed* costing of proposed research trip.
5. Details of current funding (AHRC award, etc.).

6. Details of any other financial support for which you have applied in support of the trip.
7. Name of supervisor/referee (with email address) to whom application can be made for a supporting reference.

Applications (preferably by e-mail) should be sent to: Prof. Jacqueline Labbe, Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, UK (j.m.labbe@warwick.ac.uk).

The next deadline will be in the autumn (tbc; details to be disseminated via the BARS mailbase).

JOURNALS

The Byron Journal

The Byron Journal is the world's leading refereed journal on the life, work and world of Lord Byron. It is published twice annually by Liverpool University Press for the Byron Society. The journal publishes scholarly articles and notes on all aspects of Byron's writings and life, and on related topics, and includes news of significant events and conferences in the Byron year. The journal also reviews all major works on the poet.

Send essays to the Academic Editor, Dr Alan Rawes, School of Arts, Histories and Cultures, University of Manchester, Lime Grove Building, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL (alan.rawes@manchester.ac.uk).

Books for review should be sent to the Reviews Editor, Professor Philip Shaw, Department of English, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester LE1 7RH.

For subscription details, please contact Sarah Preece, Marston Book Services Ltd, PO Box 269, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 4YN, Tel: 01235 465 537 (subscriptions@marston.co.uk).

The Charles Lamb Bulletin

The *Charles Lamb Bulletin* is a peer-reviewed journal devoted to the study of Charles and Mary Lamb and their circle. It aims to promote Lamb scholarship and welcomes submissions in the form of essays, reviews, and notes and queries from established academics, new entrants to the field, and those who simply admire the Lambs' writings.

Essays submitted to the journal should be in typescript, and be between 4000 and 7000 words in length. Preferably, submissions should be sent to the Editor as an email attachment in MS Word. Submissions should be double-spaced throughout, including quotations, and should follow MHRA style, with the single exception that the name of the publisher should be omitted from citations. A full style-sheet is available on request.

For further information contact the Editor, Stephen Burley, 2 Royal London Buildings, 644 Old Kent Road, Southwark, London, SE15 1RX (stephenburley@hotmail.com); or the Reviews Editor, Felicity James, School of English, University of Leicester, University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RH (fj21@le.ac.uk).

John Clare Society Journal

The annual *John Clare Society Journal* welcomes submissions of critical essays, review essays, notes and queries on John Clare and a wide range of related topics. The *JCSJ* is fully and anonymously refereed, listed on *ERIH*, indexed on the *MLA Bibliography*, and is available worldwide in hardcopy and electronic formats (via Gale and ProQuest, for example).

Essays should be presented according to the MHRA style guide, written in accessible English, and ideally between 5 and 6,000 words long. The editor is happy to respond to any queries potential authors might have: Simon Kovesi, Editor, *John Clare Society Journal*, Dept English, Oxford Brookes University, OX3 0BP (skovesi@brookes.ac.uk). Further details about the *JCSJ*: www.johnclare.info

The Coleridge Bulletin

The Coleridge Bulletin is produced twice a year by the Friends of Coleridge, and publishes peer-reviewed articles on topics relating to Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his circle, reviews of the latest works on Coleridge and Romanticism, and news of the wider activities of the Friends of Coleridge. The journal brings together essays by established scholars and those who have more recently joined the field. Submissions by readers outside the academy, particularly members of the Friends of Coleridge, are also welcome.

Two years after publication in print form, articles are made available online, exclusively to members of the Friends of Coleridge and institutional subscribers. Our online archive dates back to 1988, and as such comprises a significant scholarly resource. For further details: www.friendsofcoleridge.com/Coleridge-Bulletin.htm

Please address enquiries over submissions, reviews, and institutional subscriptions, to the Editor, Graham Davidson, 87 Richmond Road, Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5EP (gcdd@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Cowper and Newton Journal

The *Journal* accepts contributions on any topic related to William Cowper, John Newton and their circle but also embraces the wider milieu – literary, artistic, religious, historical, horticultural – of their contemporaries in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In keeping with its museum origins, the *Journal's* scope also covers material culture.

Each issue will contain articles, notes, and reviews. The focus will be mainly on scholarly research and criticism in the fields listed above, but it will also take in subjects of more general interest such as local topography, family connections, and reminiscences of people and places.

Submissions should be sent as email attachments (preferably as Word documents) to one of the Joint Editors. It would be helpful if

contributors could follow the Style Notes as set out on the *Journal* page of the Museum website: www.cowperandnewtonmuseum.org.uk

Joint Editors: Professor Vincent Newey, Church View Cottage, 54 Main Street, Cosby, Leicester LE9 1UU (tel + 44(0)116 286 7751; vincentnewey@aol.com); Tony Seward, 14 London Road, Stony Stratford, Milton Keynes MK11 1JL (tel + 44(0)1908 565260; t.seward396@btinternet.com).

European Romantic Review

The *European Romantic Review* publishes innovative scholarship on the literature and culture of Europe, Great Britain, and the Americas during the period 1760-1840. Selected papers from the annual conference of the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism (NASSR) appear in one of the six issues published each year.

Book reviews commissioned for issues 1 (February) and 4 (August) represent a cross section of concerns in Romantic-era studies. They are distinguished by their depth of analysis, acquainting readers with the substance and significance of current criticism and scholarship in the field.

In general, essays submitted should be between 8,000 and 12,000 words long or approximately 22 to 33 double-spaced pages typed with a Times New Roman 12-point font. Please send the manuscript as an attachment in MS Word to euroromrev@earthlink.net. One of the co-editors will acknowledge receipt and communicate with the author about the review process. Authors who are unable to e-mail may send an inquiry by post to Diane Long Hoeveler, Department of English, P.O. Box 1881, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI 53201, USA.

Inquiries about book reviews may be addressed to Benjamin Colbert, Centre for Transnational & Transcultural Research, University of Wolverhampton, Millennium City Building, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1LY, UK (B.Colbert@wlv.ac.uk).

The Hazlitt Review

The Hazlitt Review is a new international peer-reviewed journal, and the first to be entirely devoted to Hazlitt studies. The *Review* aims to promote and maintain Hazlitt's standing in the academy and to a wider readership, providing a forum for new writing by established scholars as well as essays by more recent entrants.

Submissions of 4000-7000 words and shorter reviews should follow the MHRA style. The editorial board is pleased to consider less formal items from Hazlitt's lay readership. Please e-mail u.natarajan@gold.ac.uk or post proposals to Uttara Natarajan, c/o Department of English & Comparative Literature, Goldsmiths College, New Cross, London SE14 6NW.

Subscriptions, include membership of the Hazlitt Society and are £10 (individual); £15 (corporate). Overseas subscriptions: \$24 (individual) or \$35 (corporate). Cheques or postal orders made payable to the Hazlitt Society should be sent to Helen Hodgson, *The Guardian*, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU.

The editor is Uttara Natarajan, and assistant editors are Helen Hodgson and Michael McNay. Further details are available at *The Hazlitt Review* website:

www.hwa.to/hazlitt/TheHazlittReview.htm

Keats-Shelley Journal

The *Keats-Shelley Journal* is published (in print form: ISSN 0453-4387) annually by the Keats-Shelley Association of America. It contains articles on John Keats, Percy Shelley, Mary Shelley, Lord Byron, Leigh Hunt, and their circles of mutual influence and context--as well as news and notes, book reviews, and a current bibliography.

Articles intended for publication should be prepared according to *The Chicago Manual of Style* and sent (with SASE) to Jeanne Moskal, Editor, Department of English, Box 3520, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC,

27599-3520; submissions may also be sent by email attachment to keats_shelley@yahoo.com.

The *Keats-Shelley Journal* considers for review editions of and books about Keats, Byron, Percy Shelley, Mary Shelley, and their contemporaries (particularly those belonging to their circle), as well as general studies in English Romantic literature and culture relevant to the second generation poets. Please send a review copy to A. A. Markley, Book Review Editor, *Keats-Shelley Journal*, Department of English, Penn State University, Delaware County, 25 Yearsley Mill Road, Media, PA, 19063-5596. Address inquiries or information about new and forthcoming books to the above address or to aam2@de.psu.edu.

Keats-Shelley Review

The Keats-Shelley Review is the journal of the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association, and a long-established review of major literary and cultural significance, embracing Romanticism, English literature and Anglo-Italian relations. Its unique and diverse scope includes Association news, prize-winning essays and contemporary poetry alongside peer-reviewed scholarly contributions, notes, and reviews. *The Keats-Shelley Review* is also the official journal of the Keats-Shelley House in Rome, which celebrated its centenary in 2009. The editor is Professor Nicholas Roe, of the School of English, University of St Andrews, KY16 9AR, email: nhr@st-andrews.ac.uk. Friends of the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association receive *The Keats-Shelley Review* as part of their annual membership benefits. For information on other benefits and how to join visit the *KSMA* website at www.keats-shelley.co.uk.

Romanticism

Romanticism provides a forum for the flourishing diversity of Romantic studies today. Focusing on the period 1750-1850, it publishes critical, historical, textual and bibliographical essays prepared to the highest scholarly standards, reflecting the full range of current methodological and critical debate. With an extensive reviews section, *Romanticism*, constitutes a vital international arena for scholarly debate in this liveliest field of literary studies. Visit the homepage of *Romanticism* (www.eup.ed.ac.uk/journals/Romanticism/) for full details about subscribing and contributing.

Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net

The Editors welcome contributions to *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net* at the following address: Michael Eberle-Sinatra, (Editor, *Romanticism*), *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net*, Département d'études anglaises, Université de Montréal, PO Box 6128, Station Centre-ville, Montréal, Quebec H3C 3J7, Canada. Dino Felluga, at Purdue University, is Editor for *Victorianism*. The journal operates a peer-review system. Essays and notes submitted to the journal should be in typescript, and 5,000-8,000 words in length (including notes). The script should be double-spaced throughout, and must follow the MLA style sheet. Please supply a stamped, addressed envelope or international mail coupons if you wish your typescript to be returned. Contributions are welcome from both established scholars and graduate students.

Romantic Pedagogy Commons

Romantic Pedagogy Commons (www.rc.umd.edu/pedagogies/commons/index.html) is an electronic journal dedicated to teaching Romanticism and Romanticist issues.

For more information, please contact Professor Miriam L. Wallace (mwallace@ncf.edu) or Professor Patricia A. Matthew (matthewp@mail.montclair.edu).

Romantic Textualities: Literature and Print Culture, 1780-1840

Romantic Textualities is a fully peer-reviewed academic journal and appears twice a year. The journal carries three types of publication.

1. Articles. Articles we would be most interested in publishing include those addressing Romantic literary studies with an especial slant on book history, textual and bibliographical studies, the literary marketplace and the publishing world and so forth. Please send articles (5,000-8,000 words) to the Editor (mandal@cardiff.ac.uk).

2. Reports. We also supply reports on ongoing research, in the form of author studies, snapshots of research, bibliographical checklists and so on. This material is not peer-reviewed, but provides a useful platform for scholars to disseminate information about their collaborative or individual research projects. Reports should be sent to the Editor.

3. Reviews. The journal carries reviews of recent publications relating to Romantic literary studies. In the first instance, publishers of suitable texts or potential contributors should contact the Reviews Editor (KillickPT@cardiff.ac.uk).

All essays supplied for prospective publication will be seriously considered, undergoing a process of assessment by members of the Advisory Board.

The latest issue of *Romantic Textualities* is available online (www.cf.ac.uk/encap/romtext).

The Wordsworth Circle

The Wordsworth Circle is an international quarterly learned journal founded in 1970 to publish contemporary studies of the literature, culture, and society of Great Britain, Europe, and North America during the Romantic period from about 1760-1850. Directed towards scholars, critics, and students, the journal focuses on the lives, works, and times of such writers as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake, Hazlitt, De Quincey, Lamb, Southey, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Sir Walter Scott, Jane Austen, James Beattie, Maria Edgeworth, Mary Robinson, Felicia Hemans, Joanna Baillie, Leigh Hunt, John Clare, Thomas Carlyle, Robert Burns, Walter Savage Landor, and James Hogg. *TWC* publishes essays on poetry, novels, drama, essays, publications, and publishers. The journal also includes material on non-literary figures (historians, scientists, artists, architects, philosophers, theologians, and social commentators) and topics (science, politics, religion, aesthetics, education, legal reform, and music) — anything that appeared during, impinges upon, or is of interest to Romanticists. Essay-reviews of major books published in the field of Romanticism appear in the fourth issue of every volume. Reflecting contemporary interests, *TWC* is ranging, diverse, and eclectic. Subscriptions include membership in the Wordsworth-Coleridge Association, which is an affiliate organization of the Modern Language Association.

Please make checks (in American or British currency) payable to *The Wordsworth Circle*. Mail them to *The Wordsworth Circle*, The Editorial Institute, Boston University, 143 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215. For inquiries, e-mail Jonathan Farina, Seton Hall University (farinajo@shu.edu).

For subscribers in the US: \$35.00 per volume. For subscribers outside the US: \$40 per volume. Fees include postage and membership in the W-C Assoc. We accept British Sterling at the current exchange rate.

SOCIETIES AND ORGANISATIONS

Blake Society

The Blake Society was founded in 1985 at St James's Church, Piccadilly, to honour and celebrate William Blake – engraver, poet, painter and prophet. It aims to attract everyone with an interest in Blake. The Society provides a focus for the study and appreciation of Blake in the London he knew. We publish the *Blake Journal* once a year. If you would like to join the Society, please write to the Membership Secretary, The Blake Society, St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL (secretary@blakesociety.org.uk). Please make cheques payable to 'The Blake Society' for the sum of £10 (or £5 unwaged). For more information about the society, please visit our website (www.blakesociety.org.uk).

Byron Society

Details of the London Byron Society can be obtained from Maureen O'Connor, 'Bay Trees', 35 Blackbrook Road, Fareham, Hampshire PO15 5DQ or the Byron Society website (www.byronsociety.com). The London Byron Society is the original Byron society and parent of many offspring, including the Newstead Abbey Byron Society (whitelady@whitelady.co.uk) and the International Byron Society (internationalbyronsociety.org), which organises a large, international annual conference (for full details, please see the website).

John Clare Society

The John Clare Society has a large, active, academic and non-academic membership. It holds an annual festival in Helpston, academic conferences, educational initiatives, a range of public events, and publishes an annual scholarly journal, quarterly newsletters and occasional editions and essay collections. Anyone interested in Clare is very welcome to join the society: (www.johnclare.org.uk/) or write to Sue Holgate, Membership Secretary, John Clare Society, 9 The Chase, Ely, Cambs CB6 3DR.

The Friends of Coleridge

The Friends of Coleridge aim to foster interest in the life and works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his circle, and to support Coleridge Cottage in Nether Stowey, Somerset, through co-operation with the National Trust.

We publish the *Coleridge Bulletin*, sent to members twice a year, host the biennial Coleridge Summer Conference at Cannington, and run an annual Study Weekend at Kilve, both in North Somerset, close to the Quantock Hills.

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Please direct enquiries to the Membership Secretary, Justin Shepherd, The Coach House, Ford, Wiveliscombe, Somerset TR4 2RJ (membership@friendsofcoleridge.com). Further details of our activities are available at www.friendsofcoleridge.com.

James Hogg Society

The James Hogg Society exists to encourage the study of the life, writings and world of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd (1770-1835). In return for an annual subscription (currently £20, or £10 for students, retired people, etc.) members receive the annual journal *Studies in Hogg and his World*. Events include a conference held at two-yearly intervals, and members are entitled to a 25% discount on the hardback volumes of the Stirling/South Carolina

Edition of the *Collected Works of James Hogg* published by Edinburgh University Press, as well as to purchase the Society's own occasional publications at a reduced price. To join the Society please contact the Treasurer, Wendy Hunter (W.A.Hunter@sheffield.ac.uk). Offers of material for, and enquires about, *Studies in Hogg and his World* should be addressed to the Editor, Gill Hughes (gillhh@lineone.net).

The Charles Lamb Society

The Charles Lamb Society was founded on 1 February 1935 at a meeting at Essex Hall in The Strand. Its first President was Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Today, the Society aims to advance the study of the life, works, and times of Charles and Mary Lamb and their circle; to preserve for the public a collection of Eliana (currently held at the Guildhall Library, London); and to stimulate the Elian spirit of friendliness and humour.

The Society holds a series of events each year in London. This includes a variety of lectures and talks, and a Charles Lamb Birthday Luncheon. The Society also publishes the peer-review journal, *The Charles Lamb Bulletin*. For further information contact the Chairman, Nick Powell (nrdpowell@gmail.com).

International Society for Travel Writing

This society was founded in 2001 to promote the practice and study of travel writing across disciplines and across historical periods. Now about 500 strong, we welcome practising travel writers as well as scholars from literary studies, history, anthropology and other disciplines. The organisation sponsors a biennial conference and a monthly email newsletter comprised of calls for papers, notices of recent publications and profiles of library and electronic archives with substantial holdings in travel materials. To join the organisation and to receive the newsletter, *The Snapshot Traveller*, contact Donald Ross (rossj001@umn.edu), our Executive Secretary.

Keats-Shelley Association of America

The Keats-Shelley Association of America supports a range of activities related to Romanticism, including conferences and awards, and members receive notices of special events and opportunities. Students are given a low rate with a verifying letter from an instructor. Advanced categories of support are also available for established scholars and others who wish to contribute to the Association. For a full list of membership-dues categories and their dollar amounts write to Robert A. Hartley, Secretary, KSAA, Room 226, The New York Public Library, 476 Fifth Avenue, NY 10018-2788, USA (robert.hartley@us.pwcglobal.com) or go to the Association's website (www.rc.umd.edu/ksaa/info/htm).

Keats-Shelley Memorial Association

The Association was formed in 1903, with the support of King Edward VII, King Vittorio Emanuele III and President 'Teddy' Roosevelt. Apart from maintaining the Keats-Shelley Memorial House in Rome, the Association is responsible for the upkeep of the graves of Keats and Shelley in the non-Catholic Cemetery at Testaccio.

In Italy, we run a continuous outreach programme for schools and other interested groups as well as individual tourists. In England, we work to promote the awareness of Romantic poetry.

We publish an annual review of scholarship and new writing on the Romantics. We organise and sponsor various literary awards, readings and other events, which are also supported by the Friends of the Association.

For further information about our activities and about membership, please contact David Leigh-Hunt, Hon. Secretary, KSMA Registered Office, 1 Satchwell Walk, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 4QE. Fax: 01926 335133, or visit our website (www.keats-shelley.co.uk).

North American Society for the Study of Romanticism

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism should contact Peter Melville, NASSR Secretary Treasurer, Department of English, 2A48, The University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave. Winnipeg, MB, R3B 2E9 Canada (nassr@uwo.ca).

Announcements for the NASSR newsletter should be sent to the same address. The NASSR website (<http://publish.uwo.ca/~nassr>) contains full information about NASSR conferences, a membership form, the NASSR-L FAQ and other details about the society.

Women's Studies Group: 1558-1837

The Women's Studies Group: 1558-1837 is a small, informal multi-disciplinary group formed to promote women's studies in the early modern period and the long eighteenth century. The group meets in the Senate House of the University of London roughly every other month and meetings feature two speakers. The papers are followed by supportive and informal discussion. Members and non-members, men and women, are invited to give papers. For further information please visit our website: (www.womensstudiesgroup.org.uk).

The Wordsworth-Coleridge Association

In spite of differences of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs, in spite of things silently gone out of mind and things violently destroyed, the Poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time. Preface to Lyrical Ballads, 1802

Among the activities in 1970 commemorating the bicentenary of Wordsworth's birth, three

contributed to the renaissance of Romantic studies that we are now enjoying: the first issue of *The Wordsworth Circle*, the first meeting of the Wordsworth Summer Conference (as the Rydal Mount Summer School), and the first meeting of the Wordsworth-Coleridge Association (as the Rydal Mount Summer School Association). American scholars who had attended the first session of the summer conference at Rydal Mount met during at the Modern Language Association convention to share the convivial spirit, the intellectual exchange, that sense of community that had developed in the Lake District. In 1973, the Association and *TWC* were joined to provide members with a means of communication, a permanent administrative base, and an historical record. Sharing the same ranging and eclectic interests as the journal, under the leadership of talented and resourceful elected officers, the association meets annually at the MLA convention to discuss topics of contemporary interest, often published in *TWC* to share with the growing and distant membership.

The Wordsworth-Coleridge Association provides affiliation, services, and information to an international community of over 2500 members—senior scholars, editors, teachers, critics, historians, graduate students, librarians, authors, and non-academics in other professions. The range of topics are equally eclectic: the authors, their works, lives, and times, and their afterlives in the critical tradition. While the discipline itself and the academic institutions where it is studied change, grow and diversify, the Association, the journal, and the summer conference provide an essential center for dialogue, review, and renewal, for developing the voices of the future, for assimilating contemporary concerns, for preserving the great literary and cultural resources we are heir to, and for extending the sense of community that Wordsworth envisioned.

As an allied organization of the Modern Language Association, The Wordsworth-Coleridge Association sponsors two panels and a lunch at the annual meetings. Membership in the Association includes a subscription to *The Wordsworth Circle* (\$35.00 for 1 yr. Overseas:

\$40; we accept British sterling at the current exchange rate).

The Wordsworth Trust

The Wordsworth Trust is an independent charity established as a living memorial to the life and poetry of William Wordsworth and his contemporaries. Founded in 1891, the Trust holds and conserves one of the world's great literary and art collections including more than ninety per cent of Wordsworth's manuscripts and pictures by famous artists including J. M. W. Turner, John Constable, Thomas Gainsborough, Joseph Wright of Derby and Edward Lear.

The permanent display in the Wordsworth Museum illustrates the story of the poet's life with manuscripts, books and pictures. A programme of changing special exhibitions explores different Romantic themes. The Trust's website (www.wordsworth.org.uk) contains descriptions of the collections, a searchable database and details of the changing programme of events the Trust provides throughout the year.

Research visits to the Jerwood Centre can be made by appointment, and are open to all those who have a research interest. Situated only a few yards from Dove Cottage, the building provides modern, high quality facilities for research, conservation and for academic talks and visits, as well as storing some of the 60,000 manuscripts, books, paintings, drawings and prints when they are not in display in the Wordsworth Museum. The Rotunda of the Jerwood Centre at The Wordsworth Trust is a purpose-built space for workshops, seminars and intimate readings.

For more information, please contact Ann Pease, Wordsworth Trust, Dove Cottage, Grasmere LA22 9SH, Tel: 015394 63512 (a.pease@wordsworth.org.uk) or visit the Trust's website (www.wordsworth.org.uk).

Conference Report

Speaking Nature: Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference, Pitzer College, Claremont 31 March-2 April 2011

First thing in the morning I took the Metrolink down to Los Angeles, which was about 30 miles west of the conference venue. I really shouldn't have, but I just couldn't pass up the opportunity to ride on an Amtrak train (they *are* enormous) and see the LAPD (and associated paraphernalia) first-hand. As it so happened, jet-lagged, stymied by the urban layout and punishing desert heat (35°C), I got royally lost and missed the opening evening's reception.

Clearly, this was not the best use I could make of the generous funding that I had received from my institution to attend an event half a world away — to say nothing of justifying the giant carbon footprint I was generating with this trip. Attacked by pangs of guilt, I downloaded six of the conference participants' papers immediately on my return to the hotel determined to read at least every paper of every panel that I could attend. Unlike other similar events in the field, the papers of the presenters are made available to the participants a week in advance of an Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies (INCS) conference. Instead of reading from their papers, the presenters were asked to 'give a brief, 5-7 minute overview ... to refresh everyone's memory'. How best to do this, however, including whether or not to assume that your paper has been read beforehand by your peers, was as much a cause for anxiety among INCS virgins (myself included) as it was up for debate among the veterans. Indeed, I saw a wide variety in terms of approach (and one

embarrassing disaster), but assuming at least a few people in the room read the papers being presented, and assuming a moderator who does not fight for the limelight, and who conducts affairs with a light but firm hand, I cannot imagine a better system than the hour or so (per panel) opened to the floor for questions, disputation and discussion. My own presentation on 'The Moral Language of Nature' was itself the target of sustained critique by Keith Hanley, which allowed me to clarify my position—on myself as much as everyone else—on the Christian and middle-class roots of environmentalism.

I make no apologies for adopting this very personal address, because it is so impossible to provide a balanced summation of international events like this one that I don't think I should even bother trying. I am not even going to report on what I feel are the best papers, instead I am going to draw together only those that 'speak to me': work that resonates with my own preoccupations with nature *as* culture, my belief in the need to be conscious of the class-biased basis of this perception, and my desire to discover new questions (if not a new line of questioning altogether) in what is after all a well-worn discourse. Along the way, I will continue to communicate a little of my experience of this conference: why I did what I did, what I think happened because of what I did (or did not do).

We are aware of 'nature' as a social construct, that is to say, how the referent is complicated by linguistic, cultural and historical factors. The deconstructive interest in instability and discontinuity that has led to attempts to extend 'nature' as a category to phenomena normally conceived as being outside, or directly anathematic to it, is undoubtedly the source of the rather inspired title given to the first panel I attended: 'Urban Natures'. I enjoyed Jane Correia's delineation of Grevaize's decline and death in Zola's *L'Assommoir* as a twist on the Americanism 'concrete jungle': Grevaize dies essentially because she is an urban animal, unable to survive outside the city walls and its network of services. A city is more than concrete and sustains more than the human

animal: urbanaturalisation, the new-fangled term describing the assimilation of plant and animal life into an urban ecosystem (e.g. rooftop wetlands, eagles roosting on skyscrapers, etc), is born out of our awareness – I think – of the city as a cyborg of ‘green’ and ‘grey’. That was the spirit in which I understood Marguerite Murphy’s self-conscious take on ‘Hausman’s Parks’ as the ‘lungs’ of the city. It is worth mentioning that Correia and Murphy’s papers were the only two that dealt (or tried to deal) with a working-class perspective. Given that more than 110 papers were presented over the two days of the conference, it underscores the concern that I had voiced in my own paper that ‘the middle class position’ on environmentalism ‘has become such a normative one today that its class-biased nature is now obscured’. What little work that has been done on the environmental consciousness of the working class, still dwarfs in comparison what is available on the upper class: in the representation of ‘nature’ does it even make sense to speak of an upper class aesthetic?

‘Wild nature’, as much as ‘urban nature’, is a composite of living and dead things. With respect to the countryside however, rather than the ‘green’ (grass, trees, etc), deconstruction focuses on the ‘grey’. Kim Wheatley, as it so happened, in the next panel ‘Romantics and Science’, concentrated on Shelley’s representations of inorganic nature (rocks, stones, etc) to transform the poet into a deep ecologist. While sympathetic to her anti-anthropocentric Shelley, from the perspective of conservation, I nevertheless wonder if grey environmentalism should not engage as well with ruins (like Stonehenge) and the theft of ancient artifacts (like the Elgin Marbles)? It was a question that I put to Mai-Lin Cheng the next morning after her playfully entitled ‘Byron in Ruins’. I was struck by the attention she drew to Giovanni Paolo Panini’s *Fantasy View with the Pantheon and other Monuments of Ancient Rome* (1737), which was indicative to me of the souvenir-hunting mania that led to the despoliation of heritage sites. It is all a question of scale: whereas the middle-class gent might break off a small keepsake, or have a picture

painted, an upper class one could uproot the whole monument and ship it back to England. Cheng sees ruins as generative because of their afterlife, and alludes to the new functions that ruins like the Coliseum served. But when an artifact (e.g. a Grecian urn) is stolen and assimilated into an alien culture (e.g. by being made the subject of a Romantic poem), isn’t this also a form of afterlife? Furthermore, what does grey environmentalism have to say about the afterlife that the working class gave to ruins native to England (e.g. a medieval abbey) as building material for their own homes? I found Verónica Uribe’s ‘Translating the Landscape: the Colombian Chorographic Commission’ equally thought-provoking. I had no idea of the afterlife (literally) of the Picturesque in Colombia, and of the ways in which native Colombian artists drew from or resisted this legacy in their landscape representations of ‘nature’. I was impressed by the difference in use of the device of the crown: under the auspices of Alexander von Humboldt’s commission, natural features were framed by vegetation; in the watercolours of Manuel María Paz, on the other hand, those features were framed by local buildings, people and animals.

I am struck by the coincidences between natural theology and environmentalism, on the one hand, and the coincidences between the Victorian mindset and ours on the other. The stated objective of my own paper was ‘to contribute to environmental thinking by revealing how our ecological consciousness has been both enabled and disabled by this formidable inheritance’. One way to disable this legacy is to embrace the ontological questioning that the awareness of multiple social, political and cultural perspectives brings. I have emphasized in this report as many alternative frameworks as possible to understand our troubled relationship with ‘nature’. Richard Somerset’s interesting paper, which draws into dialogue the narratives of ‘natural and civil history’ by nineteenth-century geologists (Lyell and Davy) and historians (Macaulay and Carlyle), reminded me of the differences brought about by the more aesthetic and disciplinary-related frameworks of genre and

science. The dominant middle-class discourse on nature now is unquestionably the scientific one. On the first day, Brian Cooper's paper on 'Malthus, Travel Accounts and the Population Principle' brought into question its hallowed ground of objectivity by showing how Malthus massaged data; on the second day, Margaret Grover's 'Professional and Popular Accounts of Virtual Focus' subtly troubled the possibility of ontological knowledge altogether by suggesting the nineteenth-century awareness of the uncanniness (if not sheer unreliability) of the most basic human sense: sight.

Let me conclude by stressing again my very partial view of 'Speaking Nature'. There were eight sessions altogether over this two-day event, with an average of four panels taking place every session. In other words, any single conference delegate can attend a quarter of the presentations at the very most. In my case, I read a quarter of the presentations and attended five panels: two on the first day, and three on the second. I gave myself an easier time on day one because that was when my own presentation was scheduled to take place; as for day two, even though I could have attended as many as four panels I did not because I felt that doing so would leave me too exhausted to engage actively with my peers. Erika Behrisch Elce voiced a hope to get 'one useful question' through this conference to push her research: for my own part, I tried to be useful by consciously challenging myself to ask one good question to each of the panels that I attended. Asked in return what I hoped to achieve, I told her it was to make friends: there are many long and difficult books in the nineteenth century and I can think of no better way to make them less onerous than by finding people willing to read and discuss them with me.

Ve-Yin Tee
Nanzan University

Fine Arts

Paper Prosceniums and Miniature Machinery: London's Toy Theatres Then and Now

In 'Auguries of Innocence', William Blake famously ennobled the microcosmic universe, urging us to see the world in a grain of sand. The innocent and the aged alike have long been fascinated by the world in miniature, from the sequential illustrations illuminating medieval narratives to the diminutive model villages and railways that can be found all over Britain. These roadside attractions still provide welcome entertainment; from the 1/9th scale 'little' Bourton-on-the-Water village to the 15-inch gauge Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch railway. Toy theatres, with their paper prosceniums and miniature machinery, are a testament to the lasting intrigue of such objects; many originals are still preserved in museums and collections, despite their ephemeral status. They remain an important record of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theatre, spectacle, and stage design, particularly as many full-size sets, costumes, props and even theatres themselves were tragically destroyed by fire (including even Drury Lane, which was rebuilt between 1811 and 1812). Beyond that, they exist as a window into the social life of the period, where constructing a toy theatre and putting on a performance in one's parlour could provide an evening of entertainment or even be used as a didactic educational tool for children. Model theatres are vital artifacts of the visual culture of the period. The dynamic amalgamation of textual narrative, pictorial elements, and visual spectacle that they embody demonstrates the fluid boundaries between the fields of art history, literature and theatre studies, magic, philosophy, and science. A number of recent scholarly interventions and exhibition have underlined the importance of these objects.

The work of acclaimed visual artist Robert Poulter successfully blurs the boundaries between old and new, allowing audiences today to experience the magic of paper theatre in motion through what he has called his 'New Model Theatre'. He uses the traditional medium as a starting point for original productions based on pre-existent plays using modern technology. Often, the archival research aspect of his pieces takes longer than the process of building the theatres themselves. 'I quite enjoy that side', he explained in a recent interview. 'It's the historian in me'. He has interpreted plays such as Douglas Jerrold's melodrama *Black-Eyed Susan*, Sheridan's version of Kotzebue's *Pizarro*, and Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* (with versions in both English and German). Poulter is no stranger to historical reconstructions, and, in addition to his toy theatre work, has been commissioned to build full-scale models of the *Eidophusikon*: de Louthembourg's eighteenth-century spectacular and mimetic visual device. De Louthembourg had a previous career as David Garrick's scene-designer before inventing these miniature theatres (or moving pictures), which featured illusory natural effects like sublime volcanic explosions and the ever-popular storm and shipwreck scene, accompanied by sound effects and music. The shows were incredibly popular in their time, and Richard D. Altick aptly described the reception of the *Eidophusikon* when he wrote that '[c]ontemporary witnesses ransacked their vocabulary of the sublime in vain'. There are no extant examples of the object; just word-of-mouth accounts and a 1782 sketch by Edward Francis Burney, which means that any attempt at recreation takes a great amount of imaginative artistic innovation. Poulter's versions of the *Eidophusikon* have been displayed at the Altonaer Museum in Hamburg (where a show has been performed every weekend for the past seven years), at the Yale Center for British Art exhibition 'Sensation & Sensibility' (which I had the honour of operating) and in the permanent collection at the Nouveau Musée Nationale de Monaco. If this is all sounding a bit familiar, you may have also seen one of Poulter's nouveau *Eidophusikons* in the recent BBC serial, *The Seven Ages of Britain*. True to

form, Poulter has also created a New Model Theatre show featuring de Louthembourg's life and work through the lens of the artist's productions.

The full-length extravaganza, *Oh! Smith*, showcases both Poulter's historical sensibilities and his creative script-writing ability through fifty-minutes of vignettes portraying the life and times of the actor Richard John Smith (1786–1855). Smith, as the playbill proclaims, was the 'arch-fiend' and 'king of terror' *par excellence*: 'terrific grandeur', 'implacable ferocity', and 'derisive malignity' are all promised, and indeed delivered with aplomb. We are taken on a whirlwind tour through Smith's impressive catalogue of starring roles. The ambitious and well-executed array of plays are all portrayed in Poulter's distinctive style and will be familiar to historians of theatre of the period, including well-known favourites like Garrick's *Christmas Tale* (for which de Louthembourg designed the scenes), *Der Freischutz* by G. Soane and Weber, *The Bottle Imp* by Peake, and a scene from Milner's *Frankenstein*, including a nail-biting reprise that follows the monster on his escape through the Alps. Poulter's attention to detail is astonishing, and even the paper programs contain portraits of the actor inspired by Smith's own manuscripts and collection of ephemera relating to theatre history in the British Library.

Oh! Smith was most recently staged in February at London's Little Angel Theatre, known as the home of British puppetry, with the part of Smith played by British actor and toy theatre collector Peter Baldwin. Baldwin has assembled an impressive collection of historic paper theatres, many of which were reproduced in his lavishly illustrated history of *Toy Theatres of the World* (1992). In addition to collecting (and sometimes making) toy theatres, he is the co-owner of Benjamin Pollock's Toy Shop in Covent Garden along with Louise Heard; this is the successor of the original Pollock's nineteenth-century Hoxton shop where theatrical sheets were printed and supplied for 'a penny plain, and twopence coloured'. Robert Louis Stevenson was enchanted during his own visit, famously expressing his delight in an essay where he exclaimed, 'If you love art, folly or the

bright eyes of children, speed to Pollock's'. The shop is one of those London magic rabbit-holes hidden beyond an unassuming façade. Beyond the portal, hand-painted murals and glass cases of curiosities (including a dancing skeleton marionette) are clues that you have arrived: simply follow the indicator-hand up the stairs and into the magical world of Pollock's. The stock ranges from antique theatre material (including images of actors), toy theatre sheets, and plays. One can also purchase a praxinoscope (an early optical toy and precursor to the motion picture; when the drum is spun stationary pictures are animated on an inner circle of mirrors), a signed copy of A. E. Wilson's canonical c1930s history of Juvenile drama, and individual 3-D cardboard stereoscopes by artist Clare Jordan.

Gazing through the proscenium frames into the exquisitely detailed shadow-box scenes of Romantic and Victorian theatres, one suddenly begins to relate to Swift's protagonist Gulliver as he is introduced to the Lilliputian page who 'seemed to be somewhat longer than [his] middle finger'. In the case of Everett's English Toy Theatre Company's miniature Regency theatre at Pollock's, one can certainly hold the *Silver Palace* play and *Mazeppa* in the palm of their hand. Whilst perhaps not quite a world in grain of sand, toy theatres are certainly auguries of innocence.

You can visit Benjamin Pollock's at www.pollocks-coventgarden.co.uk/index.php.

For more information on Robert's work, including a range of visual material, visit: www.newmodeltheatre.co.uk/ or catch one of his up-and-coming performances:

26 – 29 May with the Royal Holloway College Student Show *The Rowers* at The Paper Theatre Festival (organized by Alain Lecucq) in the Champagne District of Northern France

1 July at 4 pm and 2 July and 2 & 4 pm
Black-Eyed Susan
Ryde, Isle of Wight at the Arcade Festival

28 August at 7:30 pm
Robert Poulter, Joe Gladwin, and Barry Clarke
Three different shows in one evening – celebrating 200 years of toy theatre at the Ramsgate Squall Arts Festival

29 August, 12 noon, 3pm, 5pm
The Depiction of Clouds, a performance piece by Robert Poulter and Serena Korda at the new Turner Contemporary in Margate:
www.development.turnercontemporary.com/whats-on/category/performances

Kathryn R. Barush
Wadham College, Oxford

[Please note that images to accompany this article are available on the 'BARS Bulletin & Review' page on the BARS website.]

Early Career and Postgraduate Column

Daniel Cook, the current Early Career and Postgraduate Representative for BARS, is a Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellow and Assistant Director of the Centre for Romantic Studies at the University of Bristol. Matthew Sangster, the Postgraduate Representative, is a Ph.D. student at Royal Holloway, University of London and is cataloguing the Royal Literary Fund Archive for the British Library.

Visible Forces

Applications for undergraduate places at the majority of universities continue to outstrip supply, particularly in the Arts. Graduate schools around the country are packed with MA, M.Phil., D.Phil. and Ph.D. students, many of whom are at least partly self-funded. In the mercantile rhetoric of the government, then, demand is high. In public speeches ministers are keen to draw attention to Britain's world-leading universities and tout the quality of UK-based research. However, this doesn't seem to have stopped them rushing through sweeping reforms which display a fundamental scepticism about the value of research culture and of the idea that a university education is anything more than an individual benefit. Tuition fee increases and vast cuts to research funding and the teaching grant seek to create a peculiar quasi-market that threatens to undermine some universities to such an extent that many departments may be unable to accommodate new students and face closure.

No one would pretend that the average university operates on an entirely sound business model. Many borrow above their means, or against future income, in order to fund estate management or to expand their faculties, or even to meet their running costs. Vice-chancellors and senior staff are often maligned for accepting

salaries that far outweigh even the so-called superstar academics (although bumper salaries for management are hardly uncommon in industry either). The problem, of course, is that universities are not purely, or even principally, businesses. The most valuable benefits they produce are intellectual and spiritual, enriching their students, staff and wider society through creativity and discovery. Even at their most basic level, our universities are factories of learning, institutions that produce thousands of youngsters with valuable analytical and communicative skills. But they also make possible the discovery of radical new technologies, both physical and mental, which result in immeasurable social benefits for the whole community. By its very nature, though, such work cannot be pursued formulaically, nor are its outputs predictable. Failures and blind alleys must be accepted as part of the process; 'If others had not been foolish, we should be so', as Blake put it. Movement towards market-led models risks compromising such exploratory work by encouraging universities to sacrifice long-term projects in favour of more predictable (and more immediately quantifiable) benefits in the short term. The financial crisis which the government is using to justify its cuts amply demonstrates the disastrous consequences of incentivised short-termism even in conventional businesses. Despite this, though, it seems that the government has made the choice to force this approach on universities, treating them to a large extent as competing companies rather than as hives of learning working together both nationally and internationally to improve knowledge and society.

While the increased fees entailed in this marketisation are abhorrent to many, members of BARS are fortunate at least in that Romanticism starts as a strong brand in this marketplace. Many ambitious teenagers will quite rightly seek places in forensic science or computer game design. (I'm not sure I'd care to meet a seventeen-year old who wanted to study the finer points of fiscal policy.) But a large number will continue to apply for places in English, and will particularly want to study Romanticism. Graduate schools are full of eager

Romanticists and year in year out many undergraduates eagerly embrace the Romantic-period modules available to them. It is worth repeating a crucial argument: at the moment the demand for the humanities is outstripping supply. While the huge hikes in the cost of a university education seem fundamentally unfair to those with the misfortune to be born post-1993, they seem unlikely to crash interest in our discipline (especially as the long-term impact of the new undergraduate loans will be to a large extent hidden from those taking them up). However, the expectations engendered by the vastly increased costs of the degree have the potential to fundamentally change the directions in which the discipline moves. Pushing university administrations to compete more directly risks their feeling pressured to give students what they think they want, rather than providing them with the tools they need to achieve a genuine and comprehensive understanding of the discipline. It is to be hoped that any pressure to sell a sexed-up, distorted view of the Romantic period can be resisted. After all, Romanticism can, and ought to, stand on its merits and by its failures.

The other potentially field-shifting change being introduced is the assessment of certain research projects based on their impact beyond the academy. While assessing impact has clear benefits – recognising local engagement, exhibition work and similar projects that would previously have gone unrewarded – it also threatens to close down novel avenues of enquiry. In recent years we have seen a wave of highly successful transatlantic collaborations, most notably in online editions, databases, and other digital areas, particularly in nineteenth-century studies. Proving the wider impact of such costly and painstaking scholarly work, though, is difficult. The risk with impact work is its pandering to the most publically familiar aspects of UK-based Romanticism, namely its associated heritage industries and geography, turning away from globalisation rather than towards it. Forced to trade on the veritable names of Wordsworth and the Lake District, Chatterton's Bristol, or Scott's Edinburgh, it could thereby create an insular sense of

Romanticism rather than celebrate a heritage that belongs within a global setting. At a time in which there is a rapid increase in the number of scholars based in Asia, Australasia and Europe (particularly in Eastern Europe) working in our field—a sizeable number of whom are producing fascinating new work on reception—this borders on the farcical. The study of British Romanticism is a developing global phenomenon, and yet in a consumer-led, short-termist academy there exists the danger of its becoming worryingly narrow. It falls to us to keep a global focus despite local pressures and to seize the opportunity impact provides to demonstrate the undoubted social value of our field without compromising its breadth or innovations.

Another risk to academic creativity is its being stifled by increasingly deep drifts of paperwork. Research drives promotions and is at the heart of what we do, but the funding cuts will make it harder (and more time-consuming) to secure support. Impact means some academics at least having to produce statistical evidence of their research's applications, potentially sidelining cutting-edge projects in favour of easier sells that pander to the moment (and possibly to the government—Big Romantic Society, anyone?). The new fees presumably mean that students will (perhaps rightly) push hard for increased teaching attention; and yet the government, while keen to see standards of teaching improve, haven't really identified what's wrong with it currently or offered extra support to allow it to do so, beyond, of course, the right to charge a lot more. All these factors also seem to mean more time will be spent form-filling (for smaller or more competitive research grants, to prove impact, to keep accounts of keeping students happy). It saddens us that the government seems to want to make academic work more a box-ticking job and less a heartfelt vocation driven by the pursuit of knowledge and beauty. Still, good work remains to be done and bright students remain to be educated. The field is vibrant, its value enduring. If we do have to market Romanticism, it's a pretty easy sell. But we need to make sure that we can set terms that are fair for all.

Events

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

Female Explorers: Women's Scientific Travelling, 1750- 1850

A one-day interdisciplinary seminar
Nottingham Trent University
3 March 2012

It is often assumed, in both scholarly and popular accounts of travel and travel writing, that scientific travel and exploration was a male preserve until at least the late twentieth century. The same received wisdom, moreover, assumes that the many women travellers of earlier eras invariably travelled in a more desultory and dilettante fashion – as devotees of the 'picturesque', for example, or as 'sentimental' tourists. Recent scholarship, however, has begun to question and problematize these stereotypical views, especially in relation to some late 19th-century women travellers. As several studies have shown, figures such as Isabella Bird and Mary Kingsley undoubtedly made important contributions to contemporary science, although the gender norms of their day usually required them to be self-deprecating and to disclaim the highly esteemed label of 'explorer'.

Less well-known, however, are Bird and Kingsley's many precursors in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Maria Graham, for example, became in 1824 the first woman to publish in the *Transactions of the Geological Society*, when she contributed a report on an earthquake she had witnessed in Chile. Sarah Bowdich, meanwhile, accompanied her husband Thomas on an expedition to Gambia in 1822, and made numerous scientific discoveries in her own right.

Female Explorers: Women's Scientific Travelling, 1750-1850 is intended as an interdisciplinary seminar which can shed further light on these precursors to Bird and Kingsley. We accordingly seek papers exploring any aspect of the intersections between women, science, travel and travel writing in this period. We anticipate that this will include topics such as: women who travelled in scientific spirit, conducting fieldwork or other forms of research; women who used travel writing as means of engaging with, or contributing to, contemporary scientific debate; the discursive and rhetorical difficulties faced in this period by women in adopting a scientific persona on the page; the wider intellectual and cultural networks which enabled and assisted women's participation in contemporary science. Please note that this could also include papers on some of the men who worked most closely with women in this period: Hooker in Britain, for example, or Cuvier in France.

We welcome papers dealing with women of any nationality or culture, although we will expect papers to be delivered in English. To propose a paper, or for any other enquiries, please contact Dr Carl Thompson at Nottingham Trent University (carl.thompson@ntu.ac.uk). The deadline for proposals is 1 September 2011.

Crabbe's Tales

Newcastle University
12- 13 July 2012

Confirmed keynote speakers: Dr. Mina Gorji (University of Cambridge), Prof. Claire Lamont (Newcastle University), Prof. Fiona Stafford (University of Oxford)

Reviewing *Tales* (1812) Francis Jeffrey claimed that George Crabbe was 'upon the whole, the most original writer who has ever come before us'. In marking the bicentenary of its publication, this conference will focus on the telling of stories and the imagining of communities in Crabbe's nineteenth-century oeuvre including *Poems* (1807), *The Borough* (1810), *Tales* and *Tales of the Hall* (1819). Its aim is to test Jerome McGann's claim (in an essay published in 1981) that Crabbe is 'a writer whose true historical period has yet to arrive.'

Proposals of 250 words are invited for 20-minute papers that address the following themes (although the list is not exclusive):

Crabbe and the traditions of storytelling (Chaucer, Arabian Nights, New Testament)
Crabbe and theories of narrative (Bakhtin, Benjamin, Barthes, Genette, Jameson)
Crabbe and verse narrative (Byron, Hemans, Scott, Pushkin)
Crabbe and Shakespeare
Crabbe and gender
Crabbe's readers, or the lack of them
The geography and social geography of Crabbe's poems
Crabbe and cultural periodization
Crabbe in an age of revolution and war
Hallucination, derangement and madness
Crabbe and his environments: maritime Suffolk, London, industrial Trowbridge.
Crabbe as 'Malthus turned metrical romancer'.
Crabbe and religion
Crabbe's politics
Crabbe's influence: Austen, Scott, Clare, Dickens, George Eliot, Clough, Britten.
Crabbe's paratexts: manuscripts, editions, illustrations, translations.

Crabbe's contemporary critics (Hazlitt, Jeffrey)

Proposals should be e-mailed to edwardsgavin@hotmail.com or michael.rossington@ncl.ac.uk by Friday 13 January 2012.

Conference organisers: Dr Gavin Edwards (Institute of English Studies, University of London) and Dr Michael Rossington (Newcastle University)

www.conferences.ncl.ac.uk/crabbestales/

This conference is sponsored by the Medieval and Early Modern Studies @ Newcastle research group: www.research.ncl.ac.uk/mems/

The Language of Women's Fiction, 1750-1830

A Conference at Chawton House Library, Hampshire 24-25 February 2012

Keynote Speakers: Prof. Sylvia Adamson (Emeritus Professor, University of Sheffield, UK) Dr. Joe Bray (Sheffield University, UK) Prof. Ingrid Tiekens-Boon van Ostade (Leiden University, The Netherlands)
parables)

Deadline for abstract submission: 1 July 2011
Notification of acceptance: 1 September 2011

Recent scholarship has questioned established accounts of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, revising traditional periodisations in order to foreground continuities, overlaps, and dialogues. The nature of current scholarship itself reflects the move to dissolve former boundaries, with the linguistic turn of literary scholarship in the 1980s contributing to revisionist discussions of style during periods traditionally described as Enlightenment or Romantic. However, although there has been steady linguistic interest in the poetry of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, developments in the style of prose fiction of the period remain largely unexplored. Fiction written by women offers a particularly rich site of investigation.

A glance at an archival resource such as that at Chawton House Library

(<http://library.chawton.org/heritage/>) confirms that women writers made significant contributions to fiction throughout the period 1750-1830. Women writers worked in a variety of genres, ranging from the gothic and historic, to novels of sentiment and manners; they produced hybrid forms, such as gothic romance or the moral novel, and hybridizations which drew on European fiction through their work with translations; women writers experimented with form also, producing innovative narrative strategies, and metafictional narrations. Such novels allowed their writers to engage with contemporary debates on gender, class, regionalism, nationalism, language, identity and other social and political issues.

This conference aims to bring together scholars working at the interface of language and literature, who are interested in the historicization of literary language, style practices and effects in the fiction of this broad period. In particular, the conference invites contributions from scholars interested in works by women, or works traditionally categorized as being predominantly for female reception. The organisers invite papers which consider:

1. How writers made choices of language for generic or thematic purposes.
2. How far writers' linguistic choices were influenced by contemporary attitudes to standard or regional Englishes, and by contemporary theorizations of language that related it to notions of thought, 'truth', ethics and identity.
3. In what ways editorial decisions and printing conventions manifest themselves in stylistic features in fiction.
4. The extent to which the aestheticization of literary style by periodical reviews influences writers' language choices

Contributors are invited to submit a 300-word abstract for a twenty-minute paper, using the conference website:

<http://www.languageapproachesatchawton.co.uk>

Reviews

Tim Killick, *British Short Fiction in the Early Nineteenth Century: The Rise of the Tale*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. Pp. 193. £55. ISBN 9780754664130

Tim Killick's book offers a refreshing spin on the 'rise of' scenarios familiar to scholars of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature – partly in its careful, bibliographic approach and partly by accounting for the rise of something other than the novel. That something is the 'tale,' or what Killick more generally refers to as 'short fiction': a loose, baggy designation that encompasses tales, short stories, sketches, and essays. Killick's aim is to 'give a more complete picture of early nineteenth-century short fiction'. And while providing such a picture means confronting and sorting through the category's inherent messiness, his approach, which is statistically grounded and historically centered, is up to the challenge. Killick argues persuasively that however loose, baggy, or messy the designation, short fiction constituted a distinct category in the period, one that was 'consolidate[d]' out of 'disparate precursory influences'.

Some of these precursory influences, such as translations of European fiction, eighteenth-century essays, 'the resurgence in interest in collecting and publishing oral traditions visible from the 1760s onwards' and 'a long tradition of short descriptive sketches', are traced in the book's first chapter. But Killick's focus is the early nineteenth century (1800–1830), a period often overlooked by scholars of short fiction who confine their accounts to a single definition of the form (the short story proper as written by Edgar Allan Poe, say, or by Robert Louis Stevenson) or who see the short fiction of the period as lacking in quality compared to fiction published later in the century. Killick is not judgmental. His approach, grounded in a

recently expanded bibliographic record, highlights the myriad short fictional forms published in the period as well as the connections between these and other genres, including the novel. '[S]hort fiction grew alongside its larger relative,' he explains, 'sometimes emulating and sometimes diverging from the paths taken by the novel'.

This connection to the novel is an important one because it reminds us that what Franco Moretti calls the novel's 'collective system' includes non-novelistic forms, too, and that these forms developed their own distinctive mix of features, styles, and associations. Killick accounts for the mixed character of the Romantic tale by outlining its place in the literary market and by stressing its relationship with periodical forms such as the magazine – *Blackwood's* in particular – and the annual, both of which allowed for the blurring of formal boundaries. Chapter one, for instance, outlines four 'adjacent' forms that bled into or overlapped with the tale: the non-fiction comic piece, the single-volume tale, the narrative essay, and the sketch. These forms are part of an overall 'complex network' of early nineteenth-century short fiction. But the 'interconnections' among them, Killick suggests, are 'especially apparent in the magazines'.

Despite the important role that the periodical press and its 'melting pot' conditions played in the rise of the tale, Killick turns in the book's other three chapters to published collections of short fiction. The periodical is the more ephemeral genre, he explains: it provided a training ground, of sorts, for aspiring writers, it helped establish an audience for short fiction, and it provided a space where short fiction's features and strategies could be established. But it did not, finally, provide the tale with literary status or place it 'in direct competition with the increasingly prestigious novel'. The stand-alone collection did both. Thus chapter two surveys the work of Washington Irving, a figure often placed at the start of histories of the short story but whose importance to British short fiction Killick here wants to recover. Irving's nationality and the literary quality of his writing,

Killick claims, inspired British interest in short fiction and helped to legitimize the form.

Chapters three and four re-examine, respectively, two major categories of early nineteenth-century short fiction highlighted by an earlier bibliographer of the form, Wendell Harris: the moral and the regional tale. Killick discusses these forms as analogues, or 'echoes', of the domestic and the historical novel but makes a useful point of comparison: characters who might only merit minor or fringe status in the novel can be 'masters of their own narratives' in the smaller form of the tale. Indeed, Killick's focus on the tale not only foregrounds characters who might be deemed minor in a novel, it also brings to the fore writers who might be deemed minor – or 'secondary,' to use Francis Jeffrey's word – in a literary history centered on novels. Although he states that it is not his intention to 'radically reshape or expand the canon of short story writers', Killick's detailed accounts of Mary Russell Mitford (in chapter three) and James Hogg (in chapter four) have the potential to radically reshape the canon of the Romantic period – a significant, if only implied, achievement of *British Short Fiction in the Early Nineteenth Century*.

Killick ends his study with a brief conclusion on short fiction in the 1830s, emphasizing not the further consolidation of the form in the 'single-effect' stories of Poe but rather its continued relation to the novel in the work of Charles Dickens. The literary market, Killick concludes, enabled what was once 'immature and nebulous' to emerge as its own distinct form in the early part of the century and to grow and even thrive amidst changing conditions – including a new wave of periodical and miscellaneous publications – in the years that followed.

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Sarah Haggarty, *Blake's Gifts: Poetry and the Politics of Exchange*.

Cambridge: Cambridge University

Press, 2010. Pp. 238. £55.

ISBN 9780521117289

Sarah Haggarty contends in her closely-argued book that '[g]iving gifts' is 'integral' to Blake's idea of art, the 'production and dissemination' of his work and the ethics that his art urges on humankind. This leads to a series of illuminating chapters on the 'economies' materialised in Blake's artistic work and sales; the patterns of 'patronage' emerging from his relations with those commissioning and purchasing his work; his critique of the language of Christian 'charity'; the poetics of 'inspiration' as an actualisation of giftedness; and 'salvation' as a transformation of relationships that is crucially dependent on the ethics of giving.

The study is historicist in inspiration, but is also tangentially biographical: it places Blake in 18th- and early 19th-century economies of patronage, and gives a vivid picture of the tensions that defined Blake's relation to patrons such as William Hayley, George Cumberland and Thomas Butts. What emerges is that Blake's relationship with his patrons was often unstable, an uneasy mixture of contract and friendship. Because these relationships were 'part financial, part friendly', the processes of economic 'exchange' and personal 'giving' became, for Blake, mutually inhabiting rather than mutually exclusive – and this exigency, Haggarty contends, shaped the way that Blake thought about the ethics of giving, sacrifice and recompense in his apocalyptic works.

The mingling of gift and exchange in Blake's artistic career leads him to symbolise 'spiritual' gifts (as well as 'corporeal' gifts) in terms of reciprocity – instead of as things that exceed the 'exchange' of the economic sphere. This means, for Haggarty, that there is no 'pure' gift in Blake – if one means by 'pure' a gift that is given without expectation of return. The gift of God – namely 'inspiration' – is for Haggarty the only 'free' gift in Blake insofar as it 'passes itself on, but is nonreciprocable, irresistible'.

Haggarty's theoretical inspiration is Marcel Mauss's account of the inseparability of gift and exchange – or obligatory – relationships in 'so-called "primitive" and archaic societies': an inextricability that she finds governing Blake's account of relationships in the social field. For the same reason, Haggarty's antagonist is Jacques Derrida – the Derrida of *Given Time* and *The Gift of Death* – because, in the former text, Derrida attacks Mauss for 'speak[ing] of everything *but* the gift' (*Given Time*; my emphasis). For Derrida, the gift (if there is one) is formally and constitutively 'annulled' by the economy of exchange: harnessed to reciprocity or indebtedness, the 'gift' disappears into recompense. Haggarty argues that Derrida's account of the gift, because separated (she thinks) from exchange, cannot account for the meaning of gift-giving in Blake, or for the ethics of giving in his poetry – an ethics founded on what *Milton* calls 'each ... mutually/Annihilat[ing] himself for others good' (Plate 38) in a dynamic of reciprocity. Haggarty suggests that Derrida's view is idealist and solipsist because he sees the gift and exchange – or Blakean 'mutuality' – as incompatible.

Haggarty foregrounds the interplay of gift and recompense in the 'spiritual' relationships of Blake's poetry, insisting that 'Blake, unlike Derrida, refuses to disengage the gift from relation'. Haggarty's construction of Derrida as her antagonist is predicated, however, on a misunderstanding of Derrida's claims about the 'impossibility' of the gift: the gift is impossible for Derrida because 'relation' and exchange in fact *always already condition it* from within. The gift is thus always already in deconstruction, impossible in any 'pure' sense. It is inhabited by the other, by exchange. This is what motivates the 'desire' for the gift in the first place: 'If the gift is another name of the impossible', says Derrida, 'we still think it, we name it, we desire it. We intend it. And this *even if* or *because* or *to the extent that we never encounter it*'. The 'desire' for the gift, whether to the other or from the other, places the gift in excess of the economy of remuneration – although impossibly. This excess of remuneration is arguably what defines Blake's

ethics of 'Self Annihilation' in his late epics, *Milton* and *Jerusalem*. Although Haggarty stresses that Blakean 'Self Annihilation' is part of a dynamic that *calls* for a response, she also acknowledges that Blakean self-annihilation risks what Derrida calls the 'gift of death': the risk that the 'gift' of death will *not* be recompensed or returned. To this extent, the impossibility of the gift (as a call for response) merges contradictorily with the *possibility of the gift in the first place* (as something that *may not* be recompensed), and the two are tied together in conflict. If this contradiction defines the risks of Blakean 'Self Annihilation' in his epic poetry, such hazards are perhaps more Derridean than Haggarty allows.

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Helen P. Bruder and Tristanne Connolly, eds, *Queer Blake*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. Pp. 280. £50. ISBN 9780230218369

In their introduction to *Queer Blake*, Helen Bruder and Tristanne Connolly pigeonhole all readers with more than a passing interest in Blake as inflexibly opinionated: they become disciples, students, even avid cult members, staunchly recognising him only in terms of their own 'cherished images'. The editors are right – Blake's dense but pliable mythology makes him one of the most interpretable poets or artists in history, which is why this collection should be praised. *Queer Blake* manages to be sensible and eccentric in equal measure, offering approaches to the poetry and plates that are often cogent and sometimes pleasantly bizarre – the range is rather diverse. Highlights, then, are not in the particular strengths of the writers, but in the daring inclusivity and its articulate expression in the introduction.

Bruder and Connolly begin by tackling prominent Blake critics, exposing their generally narrow focus and refusal to acknowledge the patent but uncomfortable queer presence pervading Blake. The editors' primary attack on

criticism of the last decade serves to shock: even recent publications prove highly conservative in their tactical avoidance of obvious queer concerns, particularly with regards to Blake's illustrations. Bruder and Connolly do not simply censure, however – they re-read these passages to show how 'queer' is often apposite to the Blakean dynamic of the divine body, free love and a personal Christianity. By succinctly reading sections of *Jerusalem* and *Milton* through this hermeneutic, they espouse Blake's openness to interpretation. A particular moment of anti-historicist clarity comes as they challenge the claim that, because Blake was supposedly heterosexual, arguing for homosexual elements in his work is an invalid approach: 'After all, he probably did not actually have dinner with Isaiah and Ezekiel, or meld with Milton via his left foot'. The humorous and common-sense tone of the introduction manages to dispel negligent critics at the same time as it prepares a space for grittier, wittier and more liberated writing.

Hobson's essay gets the ball rolling with an energetic, if clunky, essay entitled 'Blake and the Evolution of Same-Sex Subjectivity'. He laboriously but successfully extricates the essence of queer (especially Foucauldian) theory before dismissing it as simplistic in terms of Blake's 'heterogeneous' conceptions. The progression of the argument is hindered by a tendency to simply point things out and, while his observations prove important later on, the 'and another thing' style is not conducive to the flow of his argument. Structural snags aside, however, the attention given to the complexity of character relationships and their 'malleable' orientations is noteworthy. And while the tentative introduction of Blake to the discussion initially seems strained and unnecessary, the essay eventually finds its footing in the comparative reading of theory and poetry, and those previous meanderings pay off. Hobson's style is ambitious and remarkable in its deployment of theory almost the 'wrong way around', and this is its strength: it actively challenges theorized readings, using Blake's radicalism and resistance to categorisation as a

lens through which to defend the fluidity of sexuality.

The collaborators do not shy away from the topic, often revealing surprising sites of enquiry. Elizabeth Effinger's 'Anal Blake: Bringing up the Rear in Blakean Criticism', for example, tries to get to the 'bottom' of Blake with an unconventional approach that 'might mean slipping into a crack', and crams the opening with this kind of bawdy (and amusingly inappropriate) innuendo. After initial giggles, the essay's close-readings of *Milton* and *The Book of Urizen* have great clarity, but are ultimately unconvincing – while one cannot deny the visual significance of the plates, Effinger tends to make assumptions about illustrations without accounting for possible concurrences or contradictions in the accompanying poetry. Although the argument is occasionally forced, her critique of ignorant readings effectively exposes the repressed and conservative nature of many Blake critics, in turn engendering possibilities of reading actively against our sublimated tendencies.

The strength of the collection comes from its diversity, and also from the editors, whose overarching intention is to reinvigorate 'Queer Studies' with the freedom of variation that makes it 'queer'. Each essay here has its merits – Bethan Stevens's exploration of slavery and voyeurism is also recommended reading – and the broad spectrum initiates the newly-queered reader through its plurality. As Bruder and Connolly remark in their introduction, the 'roomy definition of queer' does not dilute its focus, but allows each contributor to 'mine its richness, [...] probe and question its limits'. The collection is almost sturdy enough to convince this reader that reclaiming the term 'queer' was an intelligent move on the part of the LGBT community. Finally, a complimentary word of warning prior to purchase: you will never again read the lines, 'I Dreamt a Dream! what can it mean? / And that I was a maiden Queen' without imagining Blake as a character in a 'camp panto'. Think Wagner-meets-*Cabaret*.

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Morton D. Paley, *Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Fine Arts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. 276. 28 black-and-white halftones. £49. ISBN 9780199233052

‘See an artist’s Room, see a *littery* literary Man’s Room! – all in disorder – much dirt, more Confusion – but here and there some exquisitely finished Form or Combinations of Form – in the production, no less than in the contemplation of which the Painter ... annihilates for <himself> all non-pertinent Objects, which *co-exist* with his compositions only to the Eye of his Visitors’. In this notebook entry of 1815 Samuel Taylor Coleridge captures the messy materiality of artistic creation and notes the ‘extreme Stimulation’ required ‘to endure the rags, brushes & broken gallipots of an Allston, or the scattered Books, fluttering Pamphlets, & dusty Paper-wilderness of a Wordsworth’. In an entry of 1819 ‘the Laboratory of a Raphael or a Claude Lorrain or a Van Huysen’ similarly becomes an ‘excellent instance of the Abstraction, that results from attention converging to any one Object’; for ‘the various Objects of the Senses are as little the Objects of *his* Senses as the Ink, with which the Lear was written, existed in the Consciousness of a Shakespear’. For Coleridge making the reader see required an ‘esemplastic imagination’ which isolated the ideal from the distracting pressures of surrounding objects and the multifarious disorder of the senses. Yet such unmediated vision often obstructs the material experiences of early nineteenth-century viewing, making the nineteenth-century culture of art a little harder to see.

In *Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Fine Arts* Morton Paley delves into his deep knowledge of Coleridge’s writings to provide a detailed, vivid, and elegant account of Coleridge’s encounter with the fine arts, reconstructing his visits to artist studios, private as well as public art collections, and the social milieus, gatherings, and networks, which made them possible. The book starts at the time when Coleridge ‘had no idea of pictures’ (1798) and ends with an

analysis of *Essays on the Principles of Genial Criticism* (1814), Coleridge’s most sustained analysis of the fine arts, which for him were but ‘different species of poetry’. Since ‘the same spirit speaks to the mind thro’ different senses’, Coleridge’s artistic appreciation sees one art through the other: Paolo Veronese’s *The Vision of St Helena* is ‘a poem’, Peter Paul Rubens’s *Boar Hunt* ‘a perfect dithyrambic’, and in Coleridge’s words about Blake’s art Paley perceives the echo of John Donne’s ‘like gold to aery thinnesse beate’. Conversely, as an art of seeing, ‘Painting & Engraving sends us back with new Eyes to Nature’: through the eyes of painters Coleridge feels in the people of Malta the opportunity for a Hogarthian ‘character-painting’; reading a passage from the Old Testament he imagines how Rembrandt would paint it. The conversation of painting and poetry also mediates a more intimate world of friendship and feeling. Coleridge’s poem ‘To Two Sisters’ and a painting by Washington Allston which Coleridge entitled *The Sisters* both represent the wife of his friend John Morgan and her sister. Paley’s delicate and detailed analysis shows how these sisters reminded many among Coleridge’s friends of Wordsworth’s wife Mary and her sister Sara Hutchinson, who inspired Coleridge’s ‘A Daydream’: ‘My eyes make pictures, when they are shut’. Art then could be a prompt for lived experience as Allstons and Titians embody the figures of beloved friends.

The most interesting sections of Paley’s book revolve around the places, circles, and friendships that mediated Coleridge’s relationship with art. At the centre of the book is Coleridge’s relationship with the American painter Washington Allston. Their first encounter is part of a fascinating account of expat artistic sociability in early nineteenth-century Rome. ‘Allston Redux’ reconstructs the circumstances that led to Allston’s exhibition and Coleridge’s lectures on the fine arts in Bristol in 1814. To recover ‘what Coleridge saw’ Paley traces the artworks Coleridge mentioned in his published and unpublished works, often guided by Gustav Waagen’s pioneering 1838 account of art and artists in

England. Following Coleridge's footsteps through England and Europe Paley introduces us to the better and lesser known masterpieces and figures who shaped Coleridge's knowledge of pictures, from his encounters with Sir George Beaumont in London, Coleorton and the Lakes to the circle of the Prussian Ambassador Karl Wilhelm von Humboldt in Rome and, back in London, the gatherings at the bankers Samuel Rogers and Karl Aders. At Aders's home in Euston Square, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Lamb met William Blake and Samuel Palmer among others, surrounded by a pioneering collection of northern primitives, which Paley affectionately traces in its trajectory and later dispersal. *Samuel Taylor Coleridge and the Fine Arts* is an indispensable read for anybody interested in understanding Coleridge's culture of art. Through Coleridge's eyes Paley offers us an invaluable picture of early nineteenth-century art viewing.

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**Ben Brice, *Coleridge and Scepticism*.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
Pp. 229. £50. ISBN 9780199290353**

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's status as a 'divided' thinker is well-attested (see, for example, Seamus Perry's excellent 1999 study *Coleridge and the Uses of Division*). His search for a unified system of knowledge and life was tempered by a fascination with what Charles Lamb called 'surmises, guesses, misgivings, half-intuitions, semi-consciousnesses, partial illuminations, dim instincts, embryo conceptions.' By cataloguing inchoate musings in notebooks, marginalia and letters, Coleridge constructed a performance of imaginative energy that is increasingly seen by scholars as essential to understanding his formal, published works.

In his monograph *Coleridge and Scepticism*, Ben Brice re-examines unpublished paratexts such as the notebooks in order to offer a new perspective on Coleridge's theory of the symbol.

Brice contends that Coleridge was plagued by 'hermeneutic anxiety' over the status of his symbolic vision, which was undermined by two connected intellectual traditions that he could not dismiss. The first of these was the 'epistemological piety' of Locke, Hume, Kant, and other 'Protestant critiques of post-lapsarian natural reason,' which 'tended to stress the divinely ordained limits of the human understanding'; the second was the 'theological voluntarism' of Boyle and Newton, which 'posit[s] an entirely arbitrary and contingent relationship between God and His creation [...].' The upshot of this, according to Brice, is that Coleridge's theory of symbolism is stranded between phenomenology and theological reflection, affirming a 'sacramental theory of symbolism' that appears impious when expressed in poetry. Consequently, instead of progressing seamlessly from post-Newtonian natural theology to Neoplatonic contemplation, Coleridge vacillates, 'half-describing, half-disavowing his own symbolic visions.'

The first two chapters, 'Theological Voluntarism and Protestant Critiques of Natural Reason' and 'Hume's "Fork": Scepticism and Natural Religion' trace the origins of Coleridge's dilemma to Calvinistic ideas of 'Adamic [fallen] Reason' and the 'Theological Voluntarism', of Boyle. When combined with Locke's 'epistemological piety,' these traditions confronted Coleridge with the problem that the very empiricism he decried chimed with 'sound Christian reasons for denying his own ability to read the divine handwriting of God in nature.' Brice rightly sees Hume, not Locke, as the real bogey here, the former drawing less of Coleridge's fire mainly because of the way in which he disguised his work in the 'language and theory of pious Christian scepticism.' Transcendentalism did little to solve this problem, Brice adds, since Kant's juridical and nonconstitutive reason 'avoids anthropomorphizing God, but only at the cost of a Philo-like agnosticism.' In an ingenious move, Brice argues that the critical philosophy effectively became 'a kind of Trojan horse through which Hume's scepticism breached the citadel of Coleridge's piety.'

The third and fourth chapters, 'That Uncertain Heaven': Coleridge's Poetry and Prose 1795 to 1805' and 'Between Flesh and Spirit: Coleridge's Prose Writings 1815 to 1825,' deal directly with Coleridge's own theory of symbols. Brice notes that Coleridge's propensity for complex triadic metaphysical schematisms of mind-world-god relationships betray a concern that he was in 'danger of losing himself in the objects he contemplated.' He persuasively argues that in 'Frost at Midnight,' Coleridge contrives to be 'both "inside" and "outside" the experiences he narrates' – a consequence, as Brice sees it, of the problem that the self can only be represented in the spatiotemporal forms that it transcends. Moreover, Coleridge's account of Luther's pathological visions betrays the impossibility of maintaining 'a firm distinction between symbolic vision and delusional apprehension.' For Brice, this lingering 'gulf between reason and sensibility, which the imagination cannot erase' once again signals the enduring legacy of Hume, who in turn was pressed into the role of scapegoat 'for all that was unacceptable in Coleridge's own thought.'

This is a valuable though not flawless study of Coleridge and the sceptical tradition. The first two chapters are impressively researched and will be useful for anyone interested in Coleridge's uneasy relation to empiricism, Calvinism and natural theology. Above all, the prominence given to Hume is welcome, although eyebrows might be raised at references to 'Hume's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.' Nor do the book's peculiarities end there. Brice adopts Anthony Flew's term 'Hume's fork' (referring to the latter's distinction between synthetic and analytic truths) and applies it to what he perceives to be an eighteenth-century dichotomy between revealed and natural religion. Such terminological recycling is not only unnecessary, it also courts confusion. Of greater concern is the book's neglect (Kant aside) of the German context to Coleridge's anxieties over the presumption of philosophy (tackled by Thomas McFarland's 1969 *Coleridge and the Pantheist Tradition*). Thus, while Schelling is briefly cited, Fichte,

Jacobi and the pantheism controversy are not mentioned. Such omissions ultimately weaken Brice's main contention that Coleridge 'cannot be said to have discovered an original solution' to the dilemmas of Humean empiricism.

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Robert Morrison and Daniel Sanjiv Roberts, eds, *Thomas De Quincey: New Theoretical and Critical Directions*. New York and London: Routledge, 2008. Pp. 249. ISBN 9780415399630

Grevel Lindop prefaces his magisterial twenty-one volume edition of the *Works of Thomas De Quincey* with De Quincey's response in 1850 to a suggestion that he publish a collected edition of his works: 'Sir, the thing is absolutely, insuperably, and forever impossible'. His publications were too fugitive, too scattered, to be collected. Lindop's recollection of the incident registers an entirely proper pride in his achievement. De Quincey himself eventually compiled a confessedly fragmentary collection of his own writings, *Selections Grave and Gay*, Masson followed with his *Collected Writings of Thomas De Quincey*, but Lindop had edited the first edition of De Quincey that might plausibly claim to be complete. He had successfully brought to fruition a task of which De Quincey in 1850 had despaired. One consequence was that in 2001 De Quincey could at last take his place as a Romantic author alongside a poet such as Wordsworth. It was Wordsworth in his preface to *The Excursion* and in his decision to issue the first collected edition of his poems in 1815, when his life was not much more than half over, who had established most powerfully the principle that the identity of the poet was only secured when the whole of the work might be viewed, as one views a great cathedral. Robert Morrison and Daniel Sanjiv Roberts, the two editors of this collection, like several of their contributors, have edited individual volumes from Lindop's edition, and one of their ambitions for the collection seems to be that it

offer a proper tribute to Lindop's achievement, but what makes these essays so interesting is the unexpectedly complex nature of the tribute they pay. The majority of them have in common, in Daniel Roberts's words, a concern to restore to De Quincey's writings their 'contradictory and provisional nature'. It is as if Lindop had, at last, almost a century and a half after De Quincey's death, finally constituted him as a Romantic author, and the effect has been to prompt De Quincey's most acute critics to challenge the notion of authorship that Lindop's project might seem to underwrite.

These essays find in De Quincey's writings the expression not of a unified sensibility, but of a deeply divided one. Josephine McDonagh reminds us that De Quincey had two addictions, to opium and to books. De Quincey invites the reader to picture him with his decanter of ruby-coloured laudanum, but also to picture him in his library. The effect of both addictions is to fragment the subject. A text by De Quincey is commonly so dense with quotation and semi-quotation that De Quincey's authorial identity is, in McDonagh's words, 'consumed by the books he has consumed'. As Robert Morrison points out, even in the title of his most famous work he identifies himself as a walking paradox, an 'English opium-eater', a John Bull who has contracted a quintessentially oriental habit. Daniel Roberts draws out the paradox, revealing a De Quincey who is deeply divided in his responses to the east, his fear and loathing still bearing traces of the earlier sympathy for the orient and its ways that marked the first phase of the British response to India, the phase most closely associated with Warren Hastings and Sir William Jones. Barry Milligan and Robert Morrison challenge De Quincey's political identity as an arch-Tory, uncovering a writer whose 'political outlook' is, as Morrison puts it, 'almost as unstable as his opium intake'. Indeed, Charles Rzepka finds in the influence of the 1856 *Confessions* on Collins's *The Moonstone* and Dickens's *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* the lineage that issued in the late-Victorian fascination with split personalities. In Collins's opium addict, Ezra Jennings, one half of whose hair is black and one half white, and in

Dickens's opium-eater, John Jasper, he locates the progenitors of Stephenson's Dr Jekyll and Wilde's Dorian Gray. But De Quincey is divided not only in his writings but in his thoughts about them. In a fine essay on the 'Postscript' to 'On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts' Gregory Dart describes the fourteen-volume *Selections Grave and Gay* as 'an unexpectedly triumphant end' to 'a thirty-year career in piecemeal, hand-to-mouth journalism', but the end, his essay discloses, is almost as incongruous as it is triumphant, because the 'Postscript' is 'a piece of "high literature"' which nevertheless retains an affinity with 'the popular newspapers and penny dreadfuls of its day'. John Whale, in a discussion of De Quincey's volatile responses to Wordsworth, the writer he most admired, and John Wilson, the colleague with whom he felt the deepest sympathy, similarly reveals a writer caught between literature and journalism, unable to commit himself fully to either.

De Quincey's dividedness is, several of the contributors suggest, best explained not by reference to his temperament, or to the dissociative effects of opium consumption, but by his publication habits. It is a consequence, as Julian North puts it, of 'the conditions under which the writing was produced'. For Robert Morrison the political instability of the *Confessions* is predictable in a piece of writing begun for *Blackwood's* but then adjusted to fit it for inclusion in the politically very different *London Magazine*. Julian North challenges the notion that De Quincey was committed to a masculine literature of power by exploring his contributions to *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, which was politically liberal, and, still more to the point, was uniquely for a periodical of its kind edited by a woman, Christian Johnstone. It is in a piece for *Tait's* that De Quincey imagines how Dorothy Wordsworth might herself have become a professional writer rather than simply an adjunct of her brother. She might have become a journalist and produced a kind of writing characterised not like William Wordsworth's by its egotism but by its sociability, a 'feminine' writing concerned to nurture its readership, attentive, as North puts it, 'to the needs of the readers, imagined as a

surrogate family'. One unexpected result of this splendid collection of essays is that it sends its reader back not just to the twenty-one volumes of Lindop's splendid edition, but to all those periodicals, some of them still hard to access, from which Lindop gathered his material.

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**James Kelly and Martin J. Powell, eds,
Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010. £50. ISBN 9781846822292**

Recent accounts of Romantic sociability have increasingly fed into an understanding of authorship and reception as group activities. In this regard, literature might be regarded as a field of cultural production after Pierre Bourdieu's sense, not simply as a clearly bounded domain, but one defined by struggles around definitions. These struggles included what constituted 'polite letters' in relation to other products of print culture, but also questions of who had the right to participate in or have their voices registered in these debates. Eighteenth-century clubs and societies were important locations for these issues. They were places where the struggles that defined the field took place, but also ones whose practices through different kinds of exclusions and inclusions actively shaped the field. So, for instance, between c. 1780 and 1830 in the various self-designated 'Literary and Philosophical Societies', around England, at least, there were recurrent debates as to whether religion and politics were proper subjects of debate for 'literary' clubs.

In the light of these issues, James Kelly and Martin J. Powell's volume on Irish clubs and societies is extremely welcome. Their objective is to extend to Ireland work done by Peter Clark and other British historians of the eighteenth century's 'associational world'. Kelly and Powell's introduction usefully places their enterprise in the context of recent work after Habermas, including his many critics. The Irish

associational world seems to have taken off mid-century with the key role being played by 'the transformative power of print culture' as well as general improvements in transport and communications. The driving force seems to have been in urban Protestant culture, but often using its clubbability to exclude Gaelic and Catholic aspects of Irish culture from the picture. Several essays in the collection examine the development of club life across the linguistic and between confessional divides. As in England and Scotland, there also seems to have been a development of club life into more popular circles, sometimes 'appropriating the practices of elite societies, and targeting them at the state'. This general picture, as well as the particular instances within it explored in the essays, are full of possibilities when it comes to Romantic-period studies.

Perhaps the most obviously useful for BARS members are Johanna Archbold's essay on book clubs and readings societies late in the century; Ultán Gillen's on opposition political clubs in the 1790s; Powell's on convivial clubs 1750-1800; and the two essays on Belfast and Ulster, at the end of the century provided by Allan Blackstock and Eoin Magennis respectively.

Johanna Archbold explores the very strong 'poetic tradition' in relation to the explosion of book clubs in the 1790s and the Ulster-Scots interest in Burns, material that raises interesting questions for recent accounts of relations between Scottish and Irish Romanticism. Thomas Moore isn't mentioned at all in the book, partly for reasons of periodization, but surely must have been influenced by this distinctive if diverse associational world. One wonders, also, about the role of this associational world, for instance, in the visits of Godwin and Shelley to Ireland. The former, surely, was travelling along associational networks that stretched from Dublin to London in the summer of 1800?

Many of the essays situate Ireland in an 'Atlantic world framework', which acknowledges the operation of social networks across the British archipelago into France and the United States. Late eighteenth-century Irish book clubs, Archbold shows, had strong links with those in Edinburgh, Bath, Philadelphia,

London, and St. Petersburg. What is not mentioned is the role of Irish sociability in places like Australia, India, and South Africa in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It would have interesting to note whether the migrations of Scotsmen like John Fairbairn from the sociable world of Edinburgh via the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Lit. Phil. to the formation of the South African Literary Society in the 1820s had comparable Irish versions.

Unfortunately, from a BARS perspective, the volume assumes the eighteenth-century to be a self-contained period. The same endpoint of 1800 finishes Peter Clarke's *British Clubs and Societies* (2000). Behind such assumptions often lie different versions of a narrative of withdrawal and dispersal: Peter Burke's withdrawal of the elite from popular culture; Dror Wahrman's account of the middle classes dissociation of themselves from the term 'the people'; narratives of the withdrawal of the elite from the theatres; Richard Sennett's narratives of the withdrawal from mixed social space; the effects of government repression in the 1790s. All these accounts of the decline of the associational world into dreary individualism have more than an element of truth about them, but they can lend themselves to an overly abrupt sense of the end of a certain sort of sociability. Imagine my gloom, then, when I came across a sentence in Kelly and Powell's introduction confining this convivial Irish world to a time 'before the Age of Romanticism ushered in a vogue for solitude and introspection'. It seems to me this thesis amounts to the assumption, not uncommon among scholars, that the phenomena under discussion stops because the period being researched ends.

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Porscha Fermanis, *John Keats and the Ideas of the Enlightenment*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009. Pp. 223. £65. ISBN 9780748637805

Porscha Fermanis contributes to the ongoing historicizing of Keats's work by exploring its engagement with major eighteenth-century schools of thought, particularly in 'what we now call the "social sciences", such as economics, history, political theory, sociology and anthropology'. As Fermanis notes, most previous historicist studies have focused on 'class, gender and national inflections' in Keats's writings rather than on '[h]istoriography and the history of ideas'. Fermanis 'argue[s] for the central place of Enlightenment thinking in Keats's poetry and more generally for the Romantic period's historical and cultural self-understanding'. In other words, instead of understanding Romanticism in traditional terms as a reaction against the previous century, she emphasizes continuity between the two periods.

The first chapter allies Keats's remarks on literary history in *Sleep and Poetry* and *I stood tip-toe upon a little hill* with debates on whether ancient or modern eras are better. Keats follows writers such as Thomas Warton, Hunt, and Hazlitt who trace a 'rupture and recovery' narrative of English literature, according to which it flourished in its early stages, then suffered a decline with the influence of French aesthetics in the eighteenth century, followed by a resurgence of natural style and native poetry in the present. The second chapter argues that *Endymion* depicts a progression from feudal society represented by the Latmians in book 1 to 'a more cultivated and sympathetic . . . civil society', reflected in Endymion's development from 'primitive self-interest and individualism' to concern for others when he rescues Glaucus. According to Fermanis, Keats is following developmental models offered by French and Scottish social theorists such as Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith. The second chapter also reads *The Eve of St. Agnes* as contrasting the barbaric feudal society in which the poem is set to 'a more cultivated understanding associated with

the emergence of civil society' represented by Madeline and Porphyro (although Porphyro initially is said to participate in 'the violence and bloodthirstiness that characterize the period').

Chapter three argues that *Hyperion's* ambivalent treatment of human progress, in part approving the demise of the Titans and advance of the superior Olympian gods and in part sympathizing with the defeated Titans, parallels similar depictions in histories by Voltaire and William Robertson. Robertson's *History of America* is especially pertinent to *Hyperion* in that it remained a fragment. Robertson wrote the history of South America but never finished the section on North America, perhaps because of tensions between his belief in human progress and his sympathy for the brutally conquered native Americans.

Chapter four interprets both *Isabella* and *Lamia* as attacks on the decline of contemporary society resulting from excessive commercialism, luxury, and individualism and links Keats's views with those of Leigh Hunt as well as accounts of Rome's decline by Gibbon and others. Chapter five claims that *The Fall of Hyperion* portrays the poet-speaker's 'process of interpersonal and consequently social growth inspired by sympathy, suffering and fellow-feeling' in terms that echo the theories of moral sense philosophers like Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith, and William Hazlitt. An *Afterword* briefly notes ways in which *Ode to Psyche* and *Ode on a Grecian Urn* are informed by Enlightenment 'empirical, association and sceptical philosophy'.

Fermanis is well read in the eighteenth-century texts she cites as well as in scholarship on these works and recent criticism on Keats's poetry. She offers a number of convincing parallels between Enlightenment works and passages in Keats's poems and letters. Her efforts to link her individual points into unified readings of the poems often fall short, however. Each chapter is divided into multiple sections that treat separate issues, and these don't always cohere into a consistent interpretation of the poem under consideration. Nor does the book offer an argument about the shape of Keats's career. Fermanis declares that her approach is 'more

thematic than chronological' and that she does not attempt to trace any development or progress in Keats's writing. It seems odd that a book dealing with theories of historical development does not consider its subject's growth, including the evolution of his beliefs about human progress. In a book designed to convince readers that Keats is a serious thinker, we actually get little sense of the man's mental life. The fact that the odes are not treated, save for brief remarks on *Psyche* and *Grecian Urn*, contributes to the absence of a coherent, compelling understanding of Keats's work as a whole.

John Keats and the Ideas of the Enlightenment is therefore more effective in illuminating particular passages in Keats's writing than in offering major new readings of poems or of Keats's oeuvre. Nonetheless, it is a well-informed study of its topic that offers a number of apt, suggestive individual points.

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**R. S. White, *John Keats: A Literary Life*.
Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan,
2010. Pp. 260. £50.
ISBN 9780230572638**

There is little doubt that Keats studies have undergone an intense re-historicisation in the last two and a half decades. Critics from Jerome McGann to Nicholas Roe have shown us just how much was lost by focusing solely on author and genre-centred approaches to Keats's poetry, as well as uncovering the relevance of a surprising number of historical, social, and political contexts. Some of these critical contexts, such as Keats's radicalism and 'Cockney' credentials, have emerged from research first undertaken by Keats's many biographers, but few biographies – with the exception, perhaps, of Walter Jackson Bate's masterly *John Keats* (1963) and Stuart Sperry's *Keats the Poet* (1973) – have returned the compliment by seriously considering the relationship between Keats's life and work, tending instead to subordinate the creative

achievement of his poems either to the admittedly poignant narrative of his personal life or to the turbulent politics of his age. With some of the more current biographies reaching over 600 pages and few presenting any genuinely new material, it is unsurprising that the most notable recent additions to Keats's biographical corpus have been meditative rather than scholarly studies, such as Stanley Plumly's evocative *Posthumous Keats: A Personal Biography* (2008).

Elegantly written and expertly crafted, R. S. White's *John Keats: A Literary Life* aims to redress just this kind of imbalance between biography and critical commentary, not only managing to synthesise the most innovative current criticism on Keats's life and work in less than 300 pages, but also establishing a fresh set of contexts with which to read them. Declining to simply regurgitate the same old material on Keats's childhood or medical studies, White provides new details of three different versions of an 1816 guidebook to Guy's Hospital, which may have been written by Sir Astley Cooper, as well as being the first scholar to consider the literary relevance of Keats's botanical textbook, James Edward Smith's *An Introduction to Physiological and Systematical Botany* (1807). From these texts, White draws important conclusions about the relationship between 'the creative imagination of Romanticism' and 'the humanism of enlightened medical practice', shedding new light on the origins of Keatsian conceptions of 'disinterestedness' and 'negative capability.' Indeed, it is the insightful commentary that White repeatedly brings to apparently well-established events, ideas, and contexts that makes this book so valuable. Keats frequently represented his own development as a staged progression or 'very gradual ripening of the intellectual powers' (*Letters*, 23 January 1818), but White takes a sceptical approach to familiar 'life of allegory' narratives, refusing to reinforce either anxiety-ridden 'influence' theories or the snobbery of *Blackwood's* attacks on the 'Cockney School.' Nor does he overplay the importance of typically Keatsian terms such as 'Soul-making' and 'negative capability,'

seeing these ideas as only two of many in Keats's philosophical repertoire.

White does well to remind us that Keats was a more serious thinker than either his contemporaries or later scholars have acknowledged, providing a convincing 'Lockean' reading of the 'Vale of Soul-making' letter and an astute interpretation of *The Fall of Hyperion* that registers the importance of William Robertson's *History of America* (1777). But if White is fully conscious of the way in which recent historicist criticism has recast or reconfigured Keats, he is also keenly aware of the uniquely literary aspects of Keats's aesthetic accomplishments, infusing his readings of the poems with his work on other literary periods and writers, particularly Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne, and Milton. Some of White's most original and valuable contributions in the current volume include his nuanced reading of the relationship between *Endymion* and Shakespeare's sonnets; his playful readings of the *Odes*, which question their deification but by no means 'demean their profundity'; his reading of *The Fall of Hyperion* through Charlotte Smith's *The Emigrants* (1793); and his argument that *The Jealousies* bears the imprint of Thomas Love Peacock's satires. As this brief outline suggests, at no point does White simply rehash the canonical New Critical Keats, instead using historicist criticism to compliment rather than diminish the extraordinary achievement of Keats's poems.

In any short biography there will, of course, always be room for additions and extensions, but the only point of general interest seems to me to be White's minimalisation of Hazlitt's role in Keats's poetic development. While not ignoring Hazlitt, White does not give him the centrality of, say, Bate, who sees Hazlitt's work on moral philosophy as an alternative way to medicine of understanding Keats's reflections on the sensations, disinterestedness, and associative thinking. Given that White has already published extensively on Hazlitt in his excellent *Keats as a Reader of Shakespeare* (1987) and in his edited collection *Hazlitt's Criticism of Shakespeare* (1996), I can only conclude that restricted space has forced him to choose

between familiar influence narratives and the more innovative contexts that he so expertly explores in this book. Academic readers will be glad that White has chosen to incorporate so much new material into his concise *Life*, but this is nonetheless one of those rare books that will appeal to both the general and the specialist reader: students requiring either a short biography of Keats or a critical overview of his major works will find White's *Life* an invaluable starting point for further study. Considering the amount of material already published on Keats, it is a major achievement that this book is both accessible to students and an essential addition to our knowledge of Keats's life and work.

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Richard C. Sha, *Perverse Romanticism: Aesthetics and Sexuality in Britain, 1750–1832*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009. Pp. xi + 359. £29. ISBN 08001890411

From the outset of his erudite and provocative *Perverse Romanticism*, Richard C. Sha enacts an unsettling of normative binaries that begins with the collapse of the routinely opposed concepts of the aesthetic and the sexual. Rather than being thought of as discrete, Sha contends that sexuality and aesthetics were 'actually united in Romanticism by a common distrust of function'. While a lack of purpose is valued in aesthetic apprehension, Sha questions how the same functionlessness comes to distinguish perverse expressions of sexuality. In historicising the relation between a preoccupation with non- or anti-reproductive sex and the growing interest in function in the life sciences of the period, Sha focuses on the gap, anxiously recognised within this scientific discourse, between sexual pleasure and reproduction. When separated from reproductive function, sexual pleasure or perversion, as Sha defines it, could be read in aesthetic terms as analogous to the beautiful object's purposiveness without purpose within Kantian aesthetics. This theoretical alloying of

purposiveness with the perverse develops into a controversial reading of how Romantics such as William Blake, Percy Shelley, Anna Seward, Mary Wollstonecraft and Byron de-coupled the casual connection between pleasure and reproduction in their writings, and in the process, exposed how heteronormativity impoverishes sexuality by limiting it to 'reproduction and animal instinct'. Rather than view sex as a necessarily selfish pleasure with a reproductive teleology, these Romantics connected the erotic with a mutuality underwritten by perverse purposiveness, and in doing so, Sha argues, were able to 'gauge the extent to which liberation had been achieved. . . '.

The monograph's six chapters can be divided into two parts, with the first three chapters dedicated to a thorough examination of the intrinsic position of the perverse within the life sciences. The scope of primary sources here is suitably impressive, while Sha's analysis demonstrates a skilful economy over diverse material that ranges from the physiological writings of Albrecht von Haller to the cataloguing of perversion in Linnaean Botany. In arguing for a Romantic preoccupation with the perverse, Sha takes issue with Michel Foucault's monolithic discourse of 'biopower', outlined in the first volume of his *The History of Sexuality*. Intriguingly, Sha points to how the rise of vitalism in the long eighteenth-century is at odds with biopower's two-fold reduction of the body to instrument, and broader specification of bodies to species insofar as it makes life a principle beyond material assessment, and places a recurring emphasis on the gap between organ and vital force. Arguing against Foucault's implicit view of the natural sciences as operating to 'constrain sex and sexuality and . . . naturalize these constraints', Sha attempts to show how scientific enquiry was in fact helpful to liberation, as it worked to normalise the body at a time when normalcy, and indeed, heteronormativity was under construction. This is, perhaps, the least successful argument put forward, as aside from an erotic experience based on mutuality and a clichéd personal autonomy, what exactly this

liberation amounts to for these Romantics remains decidedly unclear.

More successful is Sha's engagement with Thomas Laqueur's key argument in *Making Sex* surrounding the co-existence of a one-sex model of hierarchy in which women were inferior (though not entirely different) to men and the two-sex model of incommensurability in the Romantic period. In the third chapter, Sha brilliantly extends Laqueur's reading of the instability of sex, into a discussion of how neurological science, with its focus on the fluid connection between mind and body effectively collapsed Cartesian dualism, disrupting any routine gendering of mind/masculine and matter/feminine, thus allowing space for female writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Robinson 'to drive a wedge between the two ways of thinking about sex and to use this gap to pry apart sexual difference and political inequality'. Having revealed how perversion is both centralised and displaced within the scientific discourses of the period, Sha moves on in the remaining three chapters to discuss key aestheticians such as Burke, Coleridge, Longinus, Winckelmann and Payne Knight, before concluding with separate chapters dedicated to Blake and Byron. These remaining chapters certainly show how the lens of perversion might allow us to review Romanticism 'from the ground up'.

In tracing the epistemological uncertainty of perversion in Blake's poetry, Sha demonstrates an in-depth knowledge of the poet's *oeuvre*, revealing the textual and, indeed, material queerness of works such as *America* and *Jerusalem*. At a time when medical and psychological discourses were solidifying perversion into 'deviant forms of psychological identity', Sha argues that Blake fastened onto perversion as a way of undermining both identity and the concept of psychological diagnosis. The final chapter revisits the earlier theorising of puberty as disruptive of gender complementarity, showing how Byron exposes the effeminate male pubescent body in *Don Juan* as an insecure foundation for sexual and gender identities. By foregrounding puberty, Byron unsettles the categories of maturity and

conventional masculinity; an unsettling that is stretched over seventeen cantos, rendering the epic form, traditionally a site for the affirmation of normative masculinity, an epicene space of becoming. In discussing the perverse poetics of Blake and Byron, Sha's unpacking of the gender politics underlying Romantic formal poetic discipline is most impressive. Overall, this is an engaging study, which opens up possibilities for further research.

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Andrew Radford and Mark Sandy, eds,
Romantic Echoes in the Victorian Era.

Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. Pp. 250. £55.
ISBN 9780754657880

Echoes are ghostly repetitions, disembodied voices, and the title of this essay collection signifies the haunting of Victorian culture by the spectral form of Romanticism. For contributors including Julie Crane, Mark Sandy and Michael O'Neill, these echoes are heard in the rich play of poetic allusion. However, as a trope for re-examining literary history, echoes are not as innocuous as they first seem, becoming an obstacle along the lines of Harold Bloom's undeniably powerful, but limiting, genealogies of anxiety and influence. This is most clearly seen in relation to Shelley and Keats, where the echoes heard by Victorian writers consign their Romantic ancestors to a ghostly half-life. If this is most famously the case with Shelley, it appears to be even more true of Keats, as witnessed by the astonishing number of poems written on visiting the English Protestant Cemetery in Rome. Andrew Bennett describes Hardy sending Edmund Gosse two pressed violets from Keats's grave in 1887 in 'an act of consecration and desecration that may have been by then a rite for visitors to Rome'. Repeated desecration is an apt description for the Victorian treatment of Keats. Focusing on ghostly echoes is a very appropriate way of telling this history, but also risks repeating it.

Shelley fares better than Keats, despite the best efforts of Matthew Arnold. Andrew Radford quotes an 1897 letter in which Hardy writes that, 'I have been thinking that of all men dead whom I should like to meet in the Elysian fields I would choose Shelley, not only for his unearthly, weird, wild appearance & genius, but for his genuineness, earnestness, & enthusiasms on behalf of the oppressed'. Around the same time, however, his fiction turns against Shelley, holding him up to mockery in a move that seems close to self-disgust. In the final essay, John Holmes presents a similarly conflicted history of responses to Shelley through the myth of Prometheus. Shelley's hero was first assimilated into 'paternalist reform and Christian faith', before being re-appropriated by equally didactic radical readings. One of the richest Victorian responses to the myth, Augusta Webster's 'An Inventor', takes place in dialogue not with Percy Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* but with 'the conflict between the creative impulse and the obligations of domestic responsibility' in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; Or, The Modern Prometheus*.

From the evidence presented here, it is Byron who most successfully evades the Victorian instinct for embalming Romantic poets, in large part because of his divergent reception histories. The very different audiences for the *Eastern Tales* and *Don Juan* make him harder for later writers to pin down and contribute to his vital, contested presence in Victorian culture. In a compelling account of the intertwined role Byron and Wollstonecraft play in the genesis of *Aurora Leigh*, Marjorie Stone argues that 'this creative process is less akin to the 'hauntings' the introduction to this collection emphasises than to an 'awakening''. Stone shows how Barrett Browning responded to Wollstonecraft's *Vindication* and to a 'safely sanitized' version of Byron in her early reading, a connection which then lay 'submerged' for twenty years. In 1842-44, amid scandalous revelations about Harriet Martineau and George Sand, she returned to both writers, with Wollstonecraft helping Barrett Browning to negotiate Byron's influence in her plans for *Aurora Leigh*. Byron is also a live presence in Vincent Newey's chapter on

Dickens, which reads the representation of the upper classes of English society in *Bleak House* and *Our Mutual Friend* against the English cantos of *Don Juan*.

Romantic poetry may be an important presence in Dickens's writing, particularly in his Byronic villains and Wordsworthian treatment of childhood and utilitarianism, but it also takes its place in a much broader immersion in Romantic period culture. This is brilliantly demonstrated in Sally Ledger's *Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination* (CUP, 2007) and, by comparison, this collection works within a more constricted idea of Romanticism. By concentrating overwhelmingly on poetry, the traditional distinctions between Romantic and Victorian literature are re-drawn. And the awkward disjunction – indeed, the non-equivalence – of these labels is also problematic: 'Romantic' continually trumps 'Victorian' due to its association with an artistic movement, not just a dowdy monarch, becoming a tyrannical, Bloomian, father figure. While generalisations about the 'Romantic' and 'Victorian' continue to prevent a re-assessment of literary periodisation, the unfortunate claim on the first page that Queen Victoria was crowned in 1837 'in spite of the fact that she had ascended to the throne in 1830' goes one step too far in re-drawing period boundaries. However, despite these problems, there is still much to admire and enjoy in a collection committed to thinking across the long nineteenth century.

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Ina Ferris and Paul Keen, eds, *Bookish Histories: Books, Literature, and Commercial Modernity, 1700–1900*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Pp. 296. £55. ISBN 9780230222311

‘Bookish’ has associations of vague, dusty, and unworldly reading. It is, however, an ideal term for Ferris and Keen’s collection, which is a spotlessly modern take on literary history and neither unworldly nor vague. Contributors use a ‘bookish lens’ to observe interactions between fields of literary production too often treated discretely. The essays in *Bookish Histories* converge in situating the enterprise of literary history at the intersection of book history, cultural history, and literary studies’. The introduction notes ‘book history’ emerged as a specialised field in the early nineteenth century, during a perceived ‘crisis of overproduction’ which required new ways of configuring and theorising culture. The editors situate their collection within book history’s ‘increasingly strong commitment to relational analytical models’, in particular Bourdieu’s ‘literary field’, and aim to offer routes into literary history as a subject of historical study as well as a present critical discipline.

This approach yields revealing insights, historicising literary and book history and illuminating their present practice, especially in the first section, ‘Reconfiguring Literary History’. John Klancher highlights theoretical and ethical battles in emergent book history. Upright, ‘civic’ bibliography and the ‘biblioclasm’ of mischievous ‘bibliomania’ made evident historically contingent features of book production. Klancher argues that twentieth-century New Bibliography hid its origins amidst these dubious ‘historical fascinations or ethical visions’ in the guise of science.

Paul Keen suggests that rather than patrician-commercial tensions, ‘friction between competing versions of literary professionalism’ was more significant to modern authorship. Readers understood authors in ‘intimate and

rarified ways’, and the very commercial necessity which patricians disdained became the basis of modern authors’ success, as they embraced the tumult of modern life as lived by readers.

Attempting to bridge literary history and mechanized production, William McKelvey looks at Robert Chambers’s *History of the English Language and Literature* and *Cyclopaedia of English Literature*, McKelvey shows how the serial production of his *Edinburgh Journal* on the same presses and Chambers’s commitment to rapid, democratic communication of knowledge influenced his literary history, but also caused its neglect by genteel contemporary and subsequent literary history.

The second section looks at ‘Books in the Everyday’. Deidre Lynch’s ingenious ‘Canons’ Clockwork’ challenges Harold Bloom’s opinion that canonical texts contain superior properties of rereadability, more properly understood via ‘socially regulated consumption practices’. Nineteenth-century writers celebrated ‘literature’s companionability ... as much as sublimity’. Contextualising literature in medical discourse and anthologies which promoted habit and routine, Lynch poses problematic distinctions between rereading as a valuable comfort and as slavish repetition.

Ina Ferris provides a salutary corrective to literary history’s emphasis on ‘abstract book-consciousness’ as opposed to books as sensory and emotive objects, showing how nineteenth-century writers ‘make us privy to the size, look, and feel of books they loved’, increasingly investing ‘literature’ in comfort and physical intimacy. Leigh Hunt’s ‘aesthetic of intimacy’ exemplifies how the conversations and pleasures of private life were brought into a public sphere more usually defined by utilitarian aims.

Andrew Piper suggests that Romantic miscellanies display sharing as a ‘common right to writing’ rather than a copyright, which he glibly suggests might inform present day debates on file-sharing. There are, however, interesting reflections on the challenges posed to hierarchies of literary value by heterogeneity and the shift

from vertical author-patron dedications to those between readers.

Henry Mayhew's *London Labour and the London Poor* features in Leah Price's fascinating essay. Using the example of a costermonger who buys large newspapers so the pages can wrap cheese when he has 'got the reading out', Price shows how Mayhew refuses to accept orthodox Victorian divisions of readers and handlers of printed paper respectively into the cerebral middle and manual lower classes, instead levelling down and making paper handling 'the activity that unites different social classes'.

The 'Remapping the Literary Field' section complicates common paradigms of literary and bibliographical study. Barbara Benedict examines 'The Literary Discourse of Eighteenth-Century Libraries', showing how they became 'a space for displaying a nation's cultural identity', liminal spaces between public and private. They increasingly became means of socializing and were subject to moral discourse, which distinguished between edifying, selective collections and careless amassing as a form of 'self-pleasuring'.

Michael Mackovski's 'Bookish Forms and the Romantic Synopticon' claims that nineteenth-century writers found Hegel's notion of 'encyclopedism' – discrete disciplines synthesised into a systematic totality – valuable in representing 'the national body of organized knowledge'. While perhaps true for Coleridge, his assertions that Hegel's 1817 definition is more influential than eighteenth-century encyclopaedia projects and that the 'synoptic vision of Romantic epistemology' can be seen in 'forms like the keepsake, the annual, and the souvenir' are never convincingly established.

If the focus is largely on the print's stabilisation, Betty Schellenberg's essay highlights manuscript culture's persistence. This results from coterie manuscript practices and the cultural clout they wielded, exemplified in texts by William Shenstone, gentlemanly Lake District travel writers, and crucially in Frances Burney's suppression of *The Wiltings* and use of Bluestocking contacts to arrange subscriptions to *Camilla*.

Thomas Keymer's entertaining and shrewd essay defines 'Curlism' through detective work on Curl's obscene *Merryland* pamphlets. Keymer appreciates the bookseller's varied interests (not just pornography, but antiquarianism and politics) as well as his flamboyant arts of effrontery. Most importantly, Curl exemplifies booksellers' sharp practices, mirrored in texts by supposedly 'legitimate' opponents such as Pope, Richardson, and Fielding. Simon During concludes, with an attempt to unite charlatanism, bookselling, quack medicines, reviews, sentimentalism, and 'ressentiment' in Smart and Goldsmith. Despite suggestive connections, the material does not quite hold together.

The best essays set a high standard, but some contributors juggle too much, particularly During, McKelvey, and Piper. While Bourdieu's shifting networks and literary field provide convincingly sophisticated analytical models, laudable efforts to trace these interrelations can sacrifice clarity. Nevertheless, such complexity ought to be seen as a sign of ambition at odds with confines of the volume. There are inaccuracies: Habermas did not author Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*; William Gifford edited the *Quarterly* but John Gifford the *Anti-Jacobin Review*; and in Benedict's essay James, not 'William', Gillray is the caricaturist. There are proofreading oversights: some editing marks remain; Mackenzie's *Mirror* is credited to Strahan and Cadell in '1981'; and a festschrift is in 'Honor of Patrician Meyer Spacks'.

Nevertheless, this worthwhile collection brims over with information and ideas. The essays often make revealing connections between literary and book history that will help the reader to grasp the complexities of literary and social relations during the two centuries, as well as leading them to reflect on the historical origins of their own practice.

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Samuel Baker, *Written on the Water: British Romanticism and the Maritime Empire of Culture*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010. Pp. 320. \$49.50. ISBN 978081392795

According to Samuel Baker, Wordsworth was first to use the word 'culture' to refer, not to the way a pearl or a bacterium might be cultured, but to a discrete object of thought. Wordsworth's lines in *The Prelude* (1807), where he writes of the labourer born where 'grace / Of culture hath been utterly unknown', ironically hold both senses of the word in tension. The form and genealogy of what Baker refers to as 'absolute culture' would become a preoccupation for Romantic and Victorian poets and intellectuals, and the pastoral roots of the metaphor of cultivation have led to what Baker believes is a misconception in the critical literature. Focusing on the twin cultures of town and country discounts the importance of the sea, fundamental to the concept of British culture after Trafalgar and against the background of Empire. Baker therefore 'seeks to recover, and thence to offer, a maritime perspective' on the development of the concept of culture. Poetry, especially Wordsworth's where 'absolute culture' is first referred to, but where we least expect to find maritime themes, will be a key object of his investigations into neglected nautical patterns of thought.

At the heart of Samuel Baker's argument regarding the making of culture is a question about the extent to which Britain ought to be considered fundamentally an *island* nation. In this respect, *Written on the Water* is equally indebted to W. H. Auden's investigation of Romanticism and the sea in *The Enchafèd Flood* (1950) and Foucauldian genealogy. But his arguments participate, too, in a more recent trend, exemplified by Paul Gilroy and Margaret Cohen among others, that seeks to 'relate the island nation's geopolitical situation to its cultural history'. This is an endeavour to salvage something we know but have learned to ignore: 'While Britain's maritime character has been absolutely basic to the history of its society and

culture, that character has been all too easy to neglect from the postmodern perspective.'

A good deal of excellent research is devoted to explaining why it would be sensible to think of British culture in this way. 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner', for instance, is reset in the context of the history of Coleridge and Lamb's school Christ's Hospital, which was 'rechartered by Charles II in 1673 as a maritime academy of sorts and still in the Romantics' day maintained a sizeable corps of students destined for nautical duties, the so-called King's Boys'. Wordsworth's 'Poem on the Naming of Places', written three years before his brother John was killed in a shipwreck, shows the brothers connected by 'mutual "store"' of maritime 'sympathies and wishes', however 'enised' they might seem. Even Bentham's thoughts flowed in comparable shapes: he imagined the cells in the Panopticon as each 'an island: the inhabitants, ship-wrecked mariners cast ashore upon it.' Like the Wordsworths, moreover, criminals are best thought of as 'partners in affliction, indebted to each other for whatever share they are permitted to enjoy of society'. By tracing the currents of thought common to individuals as temperamentally discrete as Wordsworth and Bentham, Baker makes his key claim for a common understanding of culture visible in lines drawn 'across the decades and the network of minds and texts'—'it stands to reason', he says, that this should be possible.

Unfortunately, in spite of the compelling contextualisation provided by Baker's wide reading, he is finally unconvincing when it comes to reading the sea back into Romantic formulations of 'culture'. Baker is frequently let down by his style which combines a casual tone with a predilection for jargon. Worse, he simply cannot muster sufficient evidence in the poetry itself for a convincing argument about *literature* to emerge. He restates the case often, though the tone is more hopeful than assured. 'Inevitably,' he writes, 'given the significance of sea travel in the Romantic period, this conceptual dynamic of culture found expression in terms of a given dynamic of land and sea.' If the sea indeed comprises one half of the dialectic of 'Culture and Anarchy', Baker's book serves to show that

it does so chiefly in silent antithesis. Baker claims for example that Hazlitt ‘lampoons Wordsworth’s habitual use of island and castaway figures by caricaturing the author of *The Excursion* as a hapless Crusoe’ in *On the Living Poets* (1818). This proves to be a creative reading of Hazlitt’s lecture since he is commenting on the poet’s inability to finish *The Recluse* and makes no mention of Wordsworth’s preference for such tropes. It is true that Wordsworth ‘has seldom been connected by literary historians and critics to matters maritime’. This never begins to seem a vital omission.

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Alexander Regier and Stefan H. Uhling, eds, *Wordsworth’s Poetic Theory: Knowledge, Language, Experience*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2010. Pp. 220. £50. ISBN 9780230525443

This volume offers a significant and timely crystallization of one of the most exciting developments in recent studies in Romanticism: what might be described as the ‘cognitive turn’ in Wordsworth studies. The collection pays close attention to what the editors describe, in their introduction to the volume, as Wordsworth’s ‘sharply theoretical critique of poetry’s traditional routines’. In doing so, it brings together more familiar and less-often visited passages of his critical prose, while moving smoothly between readings of the prose and claims about the poems as themselves interventions into questions about the meaning of verse. It attests to a genuine critical momentum which has recently gathered around Wordsworth and the claims of knowledge.

The editors’ introduction stakes out, as foundational to the project of the collection, an awareness of the complication of Wordsworth’s position on theorising about verse, an activity that he seemed unwilling to give up even as he professed not to care for theory. Andrew Bennett’s essay ‘Wordsworth’s Poetic Ignorance’ develops this paradox into the claim

that Wordsworth presents poetry ‘as, or as at, or even as finally beyond, the limits of what is or what might be conceived of as cognition,’ whereby Wordsworth is understood to offer, in the ‘Preface’ to *Lyrical Ballads*, ‘a privileging of not knowing, of ignorance’ which bears precisely on what knowledge might be, rather than being plainly indifferent to it. A short essay by Stefan H. Uhling around the analogies between Kant’s critique of aesthetic judgement and the 1798 ‘Advertisement’ to *Lyrical Ballads* introduces such an analogy as a preoccupation that will resonate in subsequent essays; first in Peter de Bolla’s ‘What is a Lyrical Ballad? Wordsworth’s Experimental Epistemologies,’ which rehearses a claim for ‘the *thingliness* of words’ in light of Wordsworth’s note to ‘The Thorn.’ De Bolla’s essay stakes a claim for ‘the materiality of language’ and the ‘strange epistemologies’ that Wordsworth evokes in his poems of 1800. In his fascinating essay ‘Words Worth Repeating: Language and Repetition in Wordsworth’s Poetic Theory,’ Alexander Regier develops an argument around how repetition in poems like ‘The Thorn’ allows contraries such as pain and pleasure, communication and frustration to play against each other without contradicting one another, in ways that challenge what Regier describes as ‘some cornerstones of our contemporary assumptions about language.’ Claudia Brodsky’s difficult contribution, ‘The Poetic Structure of Complexity: Wordsworth’s Sublime and ‘Something Regular’’ closes the volume’s inquiry into the *Lyrical Ballads* project by reading the complexity of Wordsworth’s accounts of poetic and human experience in the ‘Preface’ through a presentation of sublimity ‘joined not to the world but to the complex structure of poetry itself.’

Soelve Curdts’s ‘Dying into Prose’: The Standard of Taste in Wordsworth’s *Essays Upon Epitaphs*’ takes a different tack by thinking about Wordsworth’s ‘deeply prosaic theory of poetry’ in relation to his thought about epitaph, and by playing around the aesthetic problems that beset a ‘levelling muse’ which tries to account for death as an experience of the ‘uneven.’ Frances Ferguson’s ‘Writing and

Orality around 1800: ‘Speakers’, ‘Readers’, and Wordsworth’s ‘The Thorn’ fuses careful historical research into the *Lyrical Ballads*’ awareness of their different potential constituencies of readers shaped by class, age and gender with the avowedly formalist claim that Wordsworth’s verse ‘narrates the advent of consciousness of other worlds and other minds.’ ‘*The Excursion* and Wordsworth’s Special Remainder’ by Paul Hamilton evokes a powerful critical matrix between the Young Marx’s account of species being in the Paris manuscripts, Kant’s reflection on the natural history of humanity in the third *Critique*, and an equivalent thinking about how what is special in the species is key to making sense of the philosophical project of *The Excursion*. Simon Jarvis develops the arguments of his recent *Wordsworth’s Philosophic Song* in ‘Wordsworth’s Late Melodics’ in order to consider Wordsworth’s post-1815 verse and critical writing as a working out of the implications of a ‘deep, and, potentially, an extremely troubling, kind of power’ that Wordsworth found in verse melody. Mary Jacobus’s ‘Composing Sound: The Deaf Dalesman, ‘The Brothers’, and Epitaphic Sound’ returns to the *Essays Upon Epitaphs* and reads it alongside of ‘The Brothers’ and in the context of Enlightenment discussions about sign language, giving a view of Wordsworth’s poetics in which ‘moments of unreadability alternate with excessive legibility.’ Finally, Geoffrey Hartman’s contribution, ‘Wordsworth and Metapsychology’ offers a dazzling rereading of the link between Wordsworth and the Freudian death drive in order to consider relations between vitality and deathliness, the organic and the poetics of prosopopeia as signs of poetry’s becalming, ‘anti-traumatic effect.’

It is hard to do justice to such a rich and intellectually invigorating collection in a review of this length. It brings together several generations of significant and emerging Wordsworth scholars, and shows the way forward for an excitingly revitalized Wordsworth criticism.

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**Walter Scott and P.D.Garside, ed.,
*Waverley. The Edinburgh Edition of
the Waverley Novels. Volume 1.*
Edinburgh University Press, 2007.
Pp. 641. £60. ISBN 9780748605675**

**Walter Scott and Alison Lumsden, ed.,
*Peveril of the Peak. The Edinburgh
Edition of the Waverley Novels.*
Volume 14. Edinburgh University
Press, 2007. Pp. 744. £60.
ISBN 9780748605781**

**Walter Scott and J. H. Alexander,
Judy King, and Graham Tulloch, eds,
The Siege of Malta and Bizarro.
Edinburgh University Press, 2008.
Pp. 511. £60. ISBN 9780748624874**

Even granted the frequent substantial delay between the publication of a book and its review in an academic journal, it may seem perverse that this review, in part, must concern itself not just with the editorial procedures adopted in these volumes but also with the success and appeal of the novels themselves, as written by Scott getting on for two hundred years ago. Partly this is due simply to the fact that this trio, selected from the complete Edinburgh Edition of the *Waverley Novels*, ranges from the undeniably great (and still read) *Waverley* to the forgotten and near-unreadable *The Siege of Malta* and *Bizarro*. In between is the really interesting case: *Peveril of the Peak*, a novel which even Scottish Literature specialists are by no means likely to have read but which is a product of 1822, when ‘the author of *Waverley*’ was at the height of his confidence and popular success. The need to consider the novels themselves is indicated by a fundamental guiding principle of the edition as a whole, a principle which has produced the particular manner of editorial presentation of its volumes.

The editors have striven to achieve two goals which at first glance may seem highly incompatible. On the one hand, they wish to

apply the highest standards of contemporary editorial theory and practice, combined with the maximum erudition and sheer completeness of information which an ideal scholarly edition of a world-famous author might deserve and demand. But at the same time, they have desired to strip away everything which they believe has stood between generations of readers and the tales which Scott wrote and with which he enjoyed his original astonishing popular success. They believe that the encumberment of annotation and explication which essentially began with the *Magnum Opus* edition in Scott's own lifetime has been a factor in the steadily declining popularity of novels which, on their own and at their best, might still provide widespread pleasure. 'The return to the original Scott produces fresher, less formal and less pedantic novels than we have known. . . Thus the novels appear as they were first presented . . . to allow a new audience to share the excitement that the novels generated when they were first published.'

These words, in fact, are not quoted from the General Introduction printed with *Waverley* and *Peveril of the Peak*. (There is no such introduction to the *Siege of Malta* volume, the two fragments of which were rejected for publication after Scott's death by Lockhart and Cadell, so that it is not offered as part of the edition but instead is a separate, matching but standalone publication). The General Introduction to the present volumes, by the editor-in-chief David Hewitt, is dated January 1999 and is the second version he had written for the series. My quotations, in fact, are from the original general introduction, first used when the series started to appear in 1993, an essay which outlined with somewhat greater directness than the later one the spirit and goals which originally animated the editorial team. The later General Introduction is concerned, rather, to summarise (in considerable detail) the nature of the textual discoveries the series had been accumulating and the astonishingly complex textual challenges encountered in Scott's fiction. As has long been known, this is a body of writing with a highly idiosyncratic textual history, as a result of the elaborate sequence of

steps resulting from Scott's desire to remain anonymous. Thus there were many different stages between the first writing of Scott's words and their appearance in print, stages at which many errors and changes of decision could and did take place. The present team of scholars, however, now understands the extent and the minutiae of this elaborate process as never before, and the resulting text might never be further improved upon. As the General Introduction explains, the texts here are based upon the first editions rather than on the *Magnum Opus* versions (which began appearing in 1829), hitherto the text generally used by previous editors. The aim has been to offer the novels in the form in which they conquered the world, rather than in the version which began their transformation into revered classics: 'the result is an "ideal" text, such as his first readers might have read had the production process been less pressurised and more considered.'

This fairly brief General Introduction apart, next to nothing stands between the reader and the opening words of these novels, as they first appeared in 1814 and 1822. There is no lengthy introduction of the familiar kind, dealing exhaustively with all matters of dating, text, historical background, critical analysis, etc — nothing, in other words, like the introductions to (say) the Arden Shakespeare. The reader is invited to go straight to Scott's story: the scholarly writing comes afterwards, but there is plenty of it. The 'Essay on the Text' in *Waverley*, for example, begins on page 367; the last page of the glossary is p. 641. That 'essay' is followed by an emendation list, a list of end-of-line hyphens, a historical note, a long section of explanatory notes, and the glossary. In other words, all this material makes up around 43% of the book. There it sits, available for consultation whether by textual scholar, literary historian, or general reader. 'Available for consultation': there are no footnotes, no superscripts even, on the text pages themselves — nothing to distract or tempt the reader away from Scott's story. No reader, however, whether generalist or specialist, is likely to complain about the extent or the quality of the scholarship on offer.

The two fragments, *The Siege of Malta and Bizarro*, presented their triumvirate of editors with a different kind of editorial challenge. Together, they occupy a mere 158 pages in a volume of 511. The editors, in this case, had to work from the manuscript texts which Scott himself had written while on that last voyage he undertook, to the Mediterranean, in search of better health. The manuscripts offer texts which are far from publishable in any normal way, even apart from the incompleteness of the stories, and the present editors accept that Lockhart and Cadell were justified, at the time, in deciding not to make them publicly available with the rest of Scott's output. They are very thoroughly published here, however: apart from the final reading texts, the volume contains diplomatic (i.e. literal) transcriptions of both works and also contains a CD-Rom which makes the mss. themselves available. In part, the texts of these two works are simply first drafts produced by an ailing author under far from ideal circumstances; this explains the multitude of detailed imperfections, but also the fact that *The Siege of Malta* deviates from fiction into mere (as it were) historical account. They are treated, however, with the total respect and completeness which characterises all the volumes in this project, a respect which reflects the over-riding revisionist evaluation which the editors accord this now generally neglected (if not faintly despised) author. For them, Scott's importance does not lie solely in his historical role in the development of the nineteenth-century novel: the claim, implicit and explicit, is that he is still worth reading by us all.

And it was with a view to testing that belief that the present writer took *Pevekil of the Peak*, which (like practically everyone else) he had never read, as his holiday reading over a New Year break. Could it be enjoyed, simply and straightforwardly, as entertainment, as the editors seemed to hope? (He had already decided that *Waverley* needed no apology, and that *The Siege of Malta* was a test case too far.) And yes, it could, even though it is the longest *Waverley* novel of all, and with its action sited far from Scott's Scottish comfort zone, in Restoration London, Derbyshire and (most

unusually) the Isle of Man. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine any general readers choosing to work their way through it: one needs to start from a standpoint of comfortable familiarity with, and sympathy for, Scott's kind of fiction. It offers his standard, fundamental fictional experience: one reads curious about the story and the fates of the central characters, and also to inform oneself (at least imaginatively) about a moment in history, taking advantage of Scott's expertise to make good one's own deficiencies. To the reader experienced in reading the best known (and best?) of Scott's novels, it offers the pleasures both of familiarity of manner and of unfamiliarity of period and topography. (It is revealing, too, that the failure to successfully sketch the Isle of Man as a distinctive location — Scott never went there and was relying on printed sources — reveals the importance of personal geographical knowledge in the functioning of his imagination.)

These editions are a sample of an immense scholarly achievement, and reveal an imaginative commitment to the reconciliation of the academic and popular styles of literary publication. They and their companion volumes are a mighty challenge to us in our thinking about Scott.

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